

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
BUREAU OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS, AGENCY RESPONSE

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT FOR FINAL REGULATIONS

Subject matter of the Regulation
SPORT FISHING IN THE INLAND DISTRICT, TROUT AND SALMON STAMPS

Proposed new section 26-48a-4 and amendments to sections 26-112-43, 26-112-44, 26-112-45, 26-112-46, and 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

Introduction. These proposed additions and amendments to the regulations, as authorized under authority of Sections 26-48a and 26-112 of the General Statutes, will establish trout and Atlantic salmon stamps, and amend regulations concerning methods and gear types, fishing seasons for several waterbodies, harvest regulations for certain species (common carp, catfish and bullheads), Trout Management Areas, Wild Trout Management Areas, Atlantic Salmon “Broodstock Areas,” Trout Parks, and Trophy Carp Waters. Additionally special regulations for black bass at Trap Falls Reservoir will be removed and several technical changes are made.

These proposals are intended to provide an additional source of revenue for natural resource programs, provide additional recreational fishing opportunities, and enhance existing fishing opportunities. Below is a summary of the proposed changes:

Section 1. Establishes \$5.00 trout stamp and \$10 broodstock Atlantic salmon stamp (\$12.00 for a combination stamp) to fish for trout and Atlantic Salmon.

Section 2. Establish definitions for “maximum length”, “Tenkara” fishing (and allow Tenkara fishing to be considered “flyfishing”) and “bubble floats”.

Section 3. Removes the closed season from Alexander Lake, shortens the closed season at Green Falls Reservoir and adds a closed season to Baldwins Pond.

Section 4. Establish statewide regulations for common carp (subsection (f)), removes catfish & bullhead from the list of panfish (subsection (j)) and establishes creel & length limits for catfish (new subsection (s)).

Section 5.

- Subsection (c). Establishes a short closed season on a small portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area (TMA) located in the Riverton area and changes the Mill River TMA (Fairfield) from a seasonal TMA to year-round catch-and-release fishing.
- Subsection (g). Extends the Mill River Wild Trout Management Area downstream to the upper boundary of the Mill River TMA.

- Subsection (h). Updates period when the broodstock salmon gear restriction applies to fishing for all species in broodstock areas.
- Subsection (i). Adds Pasture Pond to the list of Trout Parks.
- New subsection (l). Establishes a new type of special management area, “Trophy Carp Waters” on several waterbodies, with regulations that differ from the statewide regulations established in Section 4.

Section 6. Eliminate special bass regulations for Trap Falls Reservoir as per request of Aquarion Water Company.

Additionally, there are several technical changes, most notably eliminating use of the term “charr” when referring to trout.

This document provides an explanatory statement for the final regulations concerning sport fishing in the inland district. It includes a summary of the public comments submitted: 1) via the eRegulations system, 2) emailed or mailed directly to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) as provided in the Notice of Intent, or 3) presented during a public hearing held on August 9, 2017; and the Department’s response to the comments, including any revisions to the proposed regulations. The wording of the proposed regulations as posted on eRegulations and as presented at the public hearing, a statement of purpose, summaries of the comments received, final wording, and explanation for each regulation are presented under the corresponding section.

The Notice of Intent, the full text of the proposed regulations and statement of purpose, a fiscal note and a small business Impact statement were posted to the eRegulations system on July 20, 2017. The public comment period was open until 4:30 pm, August 25, 2017. A notice concerning the proposed regulations including a link directly to the posting on the eRegulations system was posted on the Department’s website and a notice concerning the proposed regulations (including the Notice of Intent) was distributed electronically to: 1) individuals who had requested notification, 2) over twenty outdoor writers and newspaper sports editors, and 3) and over 60 individuals who have requested to receive updates and news from DEEP’s Fisheries Division. Additionally an email notice was sent to over 51,000 2017 fishing license holders and a notice was posted on DEEP’s Fish and Wildlife Facebook page. As required by section 26-113 of the General Statutes, notice of the public hearing was also published in several newspapers (for this hearing, the Hartford Courant, The Day, and the Waterbury Republican-American), ensuring coverage in every county, fourteen days prior to the hearing. A total of 464 separate written comments were received, plus two individuals presented comments at the public hearing.

Section 1. The Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies are amended by adding section 26-48a-4 as follows:

(NEW) 26-48a-4. Trout and salmon stamps.

(a) Trout stamp.

(1) No person required to obtain a license to sport fish under the provisions of section 26-27 of the Connecticut General Statutes shall fish in any Trout Management Area, as provided in section 26-112-46(c) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, any Wild Trout Management Area, as provided in section 26-112-46(g) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, or any Trout Park, as provided in section 26-112-46(i) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, without first obtaining a trout stamp.

(2) Except as provided in subdivision (3) of this subsection, no person required to obtain a license to sport fish under the provisions of sections 26-27 or 26-28b of the Connecticut General Statutes, shall possess on the waters of the inland district or the marine district, or on the shores of such waters, trout or kokanee without first obtaining a trout stamp.

(3) No trout stamp shall be required for any person possessing trout in the waters or on the shores of any stream or pond the waters of which have been stocked with trout at no expense to the state.

(b) Salmon stamp.

(1) During the period from September first through March thirty first, inclusive, no person required to obtain a license to sport fish under the provisions of section 26-27 of the Connecticut General Statutes shall fish in any Atlantic Salmon Broodstock Area, as provided in section 26-112-46(h) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, without first obtaining a salmon stamp.

(2) No person required to obtain a license to sport fish under the provisions of sections 26-27 or 26-28b of the Connecticut General Statutes, shall possess on the waters of the inland district or the marine district, or on the shores of such waters, Atlantic salmon without first obtaining a salmon stamp.

(c) Fees. Trout stamps and salmon stamps shall be issued for a calendar year, and shall expire December thirty-first next following the date of issue and shall not be transferable. The fees for trout and salmon stamps, or the combination thereof shall be as follows; (1) trout stamp, five dollars; (2) salmon stamp, ten dollars; (3) combination trout and salmon stamp, twelve dollars.

Summary of proposal: This proposed new section would establish a trout stamp with a \$5.00 fee and a broodstock Atlantic salmon stamp with a \$10.00 fee. When purchased together, the fee for a “combination” trout and salmon stamp would be \$12.00.

Hearing testimony. Two individuals provided testimony at the public hearing. Keith Cagle, chairperson of the Connecticut Conservation Advisory Council, and also representing the Fairfield County League of Sportsmen and the Fairfield Fish and Game Association, spoke to indicate support for all six sections of proposed regulations. He commented specifically on this section, stating that he hopes the proposal is adopted, as the major concern of the anglers he has spoken with is that the additional money would “...save the trout hatcheries.” The second individual did not comment on this section.

Comments: The proposed amendment was endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). In written comments the FAC expressed strong support for this proposal, noting that “raising additional revenue will be critical to maintaining a quality recreational fishing opportunity for a significant number of the approximately 160,000 recreational anglers who acquired licenses in 2016 to allow them to fish in inland waters”. The Connecticut Council of Trout Unlimited supported this proposal, noting that “adopting trout and salmon stamps will help stabilize incoming revenue to the Bureau of Natural Resources and ensure that our hatcheries can continue to provide recreation opportunities through stocking of trout and salmon and education opportunities by providing eggs for the *Salmon-in-Schools* and *Trout in the Classroom* programs that serve more than 160 schools in Connecticut.” The Nutmeg Chapter of Trout Unlimited in a separate submission also expressed support for this proposal, noting, however, that their support was conditional, “...so long as the money goes toward fishing and related programs, including proper staffing of all three of the state’s hatcheries”. One comment was provided at the hearing and 341 of the 464 comments submitted either electronically or by mail addressed in some manner this section. These comment were broken into a number of categories to best capture the commenter’s intent as follows:

<i>COMMENT TYPE</i>	<i>SUPPORT</i>	<i>OPPOSED</i>
Support (but opposed unless revenues go to DEEP/Fisheries programs).	19	
Support (but only if revenues go to cold water fisheries/trout/hatcheries).	45	
Support.	11	
Support only a trout stamp.	1	
Support only for when keeping trout.	1	
Support only an Atlantic Salmon stamp.	5	
Support (but only if stamps are combined into one stamp).	1	
Support all proposed regulations, including this section.	10	
Opposed to any fee increase.		186
Opposed (reason cited - money will just go to the General Fund).		30
Opposed (unless senior stamps have no fee).		7
Opposed to stamps, if need funds, simply raise license fees a little.		20
Opposed to all proposed regulations, including this section.		5
TOTAL	93	248

In summary this proposal received 93 favorable comments and 248 unfavorable comments from individuals. It should be noted that some of the comments considered above as “opposed to any fee increase” did not specifically reference establishment of trout and salmon stamps,

but expressed sentiments, many disparaging DEEP, state government, or the Governor (or some combination thereof), that can best be summarized as “...no new fees or taxes”. These types of comments were all assumed to be in opposition to the establishment of trout and salmon stamps. Additionally, many of the comments that specifically referenced the trout stamp proposal also expressed similar sentiments.

Twenty-eight of the comments submitted in opposition included concerns that the new stamps would discourage younger anglers from fishing and/or drive many anglers of any age away from the sport. Six of the unfavorable comments included a concern or prediction that establishment of the stamps would discourage families from fishing due to the additional costs. Another five expressed concern that this proposal would make it too expensive for those who supplement their diet (either willingly, or by necessity) with angled fish. One expressed concern that the addition of another fee would be counterproductive to fisheries programs with the goal of attracting more urban anglers (such as the Community Fishing Waters Program). Seven of the submitted comments were unfavorable as the stamps would not be free for those age 65 and older although five of the commenters expressly stated that they could support the proposal if the stamps were free for those age 65 and older.

Many commenters (both those in support and those opposed) were either concerned that the new revenue would not go to fund DEEP’s fisheries programs or believed that the final destination for the new revenue would be the General Fund. They generally were unaware that by law (sections 26-15 and 26-15a of the General Statutes) fishing, hunting and trapping license, permit, stamp and tag fee revenues must be appropriated back to DEEP’s Bureau of Natural Resources) or did not believe that this appropriation would actually occur.

Thirty of the comments in opposition to the proposal specifically cited the belief that the revenue from the new stamps would just go to the General Fund, and never be used to support fisheries programs. Of the ninety-three favorable comments, sixty-five indicated either that they supported this proposal only if the revenue went to support fisheries programs (especially cold water fisheries and the state fish hatcheries) or would be opposed to the proposal if the new revenue generated by the stamps did not go to support fisheries programs.

The agency received ten submissions that indicated support or approval to all the proposed regulations, including this section of the proposed regulations. Conversely, five of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all sections of the proposed regulations including this section, several expressing concern that fisheries regulations were getting too complex. Twenty of the comments suggested that a better alternative would be to raise licenses fees, either to more widely distribute any fee increase among all inland anglers or to avoid additional complexity in licensing and permits. These were considered in opposition to the establishment of trout and salmon stamps. One commenter, while not in opposition to this proposal, questioned whether both stamps would be needed to fish for any species in several areas as “...all places that hold salmon also hold trout.”

Finally, five commenters indicating support only for the salmon stamp, noting that the Atlantic Salmon stocking program was smaller, more specialized, and supported a much smaller number of anglers specifically targeting them. Conversely, one commenter supported the trout stamp but suggested termination of the Atlantic Salmon program (also noting the smaller program

and smaller target group of anglers). One commenter was opposed to the two-stamp concept, but would support a single trout & salmon stamp. One commenter would support a stamp, but only when keeping fish, and not when fishing for any species, regardless of intent to keep trout, in the specially designated areas (Trout Parks, Trout Management Areas, and Wild Trout Management Areas).

Final Wording: As follows:

(NEW) 26-48a-4. Trout stamp.

(a) No person required to obtain a license to sport fish under the provisions of section 26-27 of the Connecticut General Statutes shall fish in any Trout Management Area, as provided in section 26-112-46(c) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, any Wild Trout Management Area, as provided in section 26-112-46(g) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, any Trout Park, as provided in section 26-112-46(i) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, or any Atlantic Salmon Broodstock Area, as provided in section 26-112-46(h) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, without first obtaining a trout stamp.

(b) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this subsection, no person required to obtain a license to sport fish under the provisions of sections 26-27 or 26-28b of the Connecticut General Statutes, shall possess on the waters of the inland district or the marine district, or on the shores of such waters, Atlantic Salmon, trout or kokanee without first obtaining a trout stamp.

(c) No trout stamp shall be required for any person possessing trout in the waters or on the shores of any stream or pond the waters of which have been stocked with trout at no expense to the state.

(d) Trout stamps shall be issued for a calendar year, and shall expire December thirty-first next following the date of issue and shall not be transferable. The fee for a trout stamp shall be five dollars.

Explanation and response to comments: This proposal was intended to establish an additional, and much needed, revenue source to support Connecticut’s fisheries resources and maintain recreational fisheries programs, including maintaining all three state hatcheries at full production levels. Based on 60,000 trout anglers and 2,000 to 3,000 salmon anglers a \$5.00 trout stamp and \$10.00 salmon stamp would generate \$300,000 in additional revenue for recreational fisheries programs. Establishment of trout and salmon stamps would also provide accurate and timely information on the number of anglers participating in the two fisheries, and facilitated targeted surveys of trout and broodstock Atlantic salmon anglers concerning their fishing activities and preferences.

DEEP recognizes that any increase in fees, or the establishment of a new fee, is likely to be unpopular, and trout and salmon stamps would not have been proposed unless determined to be necessary. Current license and fee revenues are relatively stable but General Fund appropriations to the Bureau of Natural Resources continue to decline. Simply maintaining the

trout programs at its current level will require additional revenues such as would be generated by the proposed stamps. At this time, there are only two options for Connecticut's trout program available, either increase revenue or decrease trout production and stocking. Further reductions in the trout program would mean less fish stocked and possible closure of a hatchery. Interestingly, none of the over two hundred individuals, although opposed to the new revenue source (or any type of fee increase), suggested that they would prefer that the trout program be further diminished in order to avoid the new fee.

Twenty commenters suggested an across-the-board license fee increase instead of new trout and salmon stamps as a way to reduce the cost per individual. As the trout program requires the highest level of resources relative to the other inland fisheries programs, DEEP considers the most equitable option to stabilize funding for this program is for those anglers who take advantage of this program to provide more of a share of the funding relative to anglers that don't target trout. Additionally, sixty-four of the individuals who commented in support of the stamp proposal indicated that their support was conditional on the additional revenues being used to fund trout programs.

Many commenters (both those in support and those opposed) were either concerned that the new revenue would not go to fund DEEP's fisheries programs or believed that the final destination for the new revenue would be the General Fund. In actuality, by law (sections 26-15 and 26-15a of the General Statutes, and by federal requirement) all fishing, hunting and trapping license, stamp, tag and permit fees must go back to fund the fish and wildlife programs of DEEP's Bureau of Natural Resources (BNR). Currently the fees first go into the General Fund, but then they are allocated back to BNR, along with additional General Fund monies (license, stamp, tag and permit revenues and federal funding do not cover all the Bureau's fish and wildlife programs and operations) during the budget process.

Seven individuals expressed opposition to the proposed stamps, unless they were free (as are fishing licenses) to residents age 65 and older. However in Connecticut the percentage of the population made up of people over age 65 continues to increase and people are generally staying active well into their retirement years. Fishing license sales show a similar, but more pronounced trend, with the number of age 65 and older license holders increasing by over 14,700, a 75% increase, from 19,600 individuals in 2010 to 34,300 in 2016. Over the same period, license sales to those ages 16 through 64 have remained relatively constant. From a revenue perspective, this situation is untenable over the long term unless the age 65 and older fishing license holders become an additional source of income. Charging age 65 and older anglers a stamp fee is comparable with the current system for hunters, who receive free licenses, but pay for permits, stamps and tags.

Five individuals indicated support for a salmon stamp, but not a trout stamp, as the broodstock Atlantic Salmon program is a more specialized program with a smaller user base. However, as this program relies on the same resources (staff, hatchery) as the trout program, any declines in the trout program would by necessity also affect Atlantic Salmon production and staffing.

A number of sportsmen's groups, including the Fisheries Advisory Council, Connecticut Conservation Advisory Council, Connecticut Council of Trout Unlimited, the Nutmeg Chapter of Trout Unlimited, the Fairfield County League of Sportsmen and the Fairfield Fish and Game

Association all expressed their support for this proposal, agreeing that additional revenues were needed to maintain trout programs at current levels, and possibly lead to some program enhancements.

In order to maintain its trout and salmon programs, DEEP sees no alternative but to establish an additional revenue source in the form of trout and salmon stamps. However, In light of the numerous concerns expressed over the cost of fishing, and as a number of the commenters, both favorable and unfavorable, displayed at least some misunderstanding of, or confusion concerning, the provisions for the trout stamp and salmon stamps, it would be best to streamline the stamp requirement by requiring only a single stamp (with one fee of \$5.00) for trout (including kokanee) and Atlantic Salmon. This revision simplifies the provisions and eliminates some complications, such as for situations where both stamps could be needed although only trout were being targeted, such as on the Naugatuck River where a Trout Management Area coincides with a broodstock Atlantic Salmon Area. Combining the two stamps will mean the loss of a convenient source of data to determine interest in the broodstock Atlantic Salmon fishery, however anglers will greatly benefit from the simplification of the stamp requirements.

Section 2. Section 26-112-43 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is amended to read as follows:

26-112-43. Definitions and restrictions

(a) "Angling" means fishing with hook and line which shall be personally attended, but shall not include ice fishing or snagging or snatching. Not more than three lines, with or without rods, may be used at one time except in Trout Management Areas, Wild Trout Management Areas, Trout Parks, Sea-run Trout Streams and Trophy Trout Streams, as listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, where no more than two lines may be used at one time. Each line may have any combination of hooks, flies or lures, among which not more than three hooks may be baited.

(b) "Bait" means any animal, bait species as defined in section 26-112-45(d) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, fish eggs, insect or vegetable, or parts thereof, living or dead, except for certain nuisance aquatic invertebrates as provided for in section 26-55-5 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, used with a hook for the purpose of attracting and catching fish. Any fish legally acquired, except black bass (largemouth and smallmouth), chain pickerel, northern pike, trout, [charr,] salmon, carp and goldfish may be used as bait, except as provided in section 26-112-48(b) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(c) "Bait fishing" means taking or attempting to take bait species, for personal use as bait or food, by use of a bait seine, bait trap, umbrella net, scoop net or by hand.

(d) "Bait seine" means a seine or net which, for the purpose of this regulation, does not exceed fifteen feet in length and four feet in depth and is used for the taking of bait species.

(e) "Bait trap" means a glass, wire or wooden device which, for the purpose of this regulation, does not exceed twenty inches in length and fifteen inches in diameter and is used for the taking of bait species.

(f) "Barbless hook" or "barbless fishhook" means a curved, pointed device, without a barb, used to catch fish and includes single, double or treble hooks provided each point is without a barb and hooks manufactured with a barb if the barb has been bent down to the hook, broken off or otherwise made ineffective.

(g) "Bobbing" means fishing with a ball or mass of worms or other bait attached to a line held in the hand or a line attached to a rod held in the hand to which no hooks are attached.

(h) "Bow and arrow fishing" means fishing by use of a weapon made of wood or other elastic material, with a cord to connect the two ends when bent, by which an arrow is propelled, but shall not include the use of a cross bow. The use of a cross bow in fishing is prohibited.

(i) "Children's stream" and "children's pond" means waters that are set aside in whole or in part as children's fishing areas when such restriction is indicated by posters. Angling in such areas is restricted to children under sixteen years of age.

(j) "Closed season" means that period of time during which all fishing is prohibited in the area specified.

(k) "Daily creel limit" means the quantity or number of fish of a species or species group that can be taken by an individual angler during the period from 12:01 a.m. to midnight.

(l) "Disabled Persons Fishing Area" means an area set aside for the exclusive use by the physically handicapped when such restriction is indicated by posters.

(m) "Downrigger" means a device, supplemental to a fishing line, used to deploy, via an electric or handpowered winch, reel or spool that projects over the side or stern of a boat and is used as a hoist, main line and terminal weight, one or more fishing lines to a desired depth in the water column.

(n) "Gaff" means a spear or hook, with or without a handle, used for holding or lifting fish. The use of a gaff to land or assist in landing a fish is prohibited in the inland district.

(o) "Hook" or "fishhook" means a curved, pointed device, with or without barb, used to catch fish. Hooks may be single, double or treble and each point shall be considered as a single hook.

(p) "Fishing" or "sport fishing" means taking or attempting to take fish in the inland district, except for commercial purposes, and is restricted to angling, bow and arrow fishing, bobbing, ice fishing, snagging or snatching, spearing, scoop netting, and taking or attempting to take fish by hand.

(q) "Float" or "bobber" means any buoyant object attached to a fishing line. No such float shall be used unless the line is personally attended.

(r) "Fly" means a single or double hook dressed with hair, feathers, tinsel, thread, yarn or similar material to which no bait, spinner, spoon, plug or other device is added.

(s) "Fly fishing" means angling with the use of a fly reel, fly rod, fly line, leader and a fly or flies[.], except that Tenkara fishing shall also be considered fly fishing. Additional weight may be built into the fly in its construction, as in a weighted nymph, and additional weight may be attached to the leader. The use of strike indicators, as defined in this section, is permitted.

(t) "Hand-held jig" means a rod, jig stick or line held in the hand, used for fishing through the ice.

(u) "Ice fishing" means fishing through the ice with tip-ups, bobbers or floats, similar devices or hand-held jigs. The following restrictions shall apply to ice fishing:

(1) An individual may use, at one time, tip-ups, bobbers or floats, similar devices or hand-held jigs in any combination thereof, not exceeding six in the aggregate.

(2) Each line shall be restricted to not more than three baited hooks, with or without attractors, or three ice flies or three artificial lures or any combination thereof, not exceeding three in the aggregate.

(3) All tip-ups, bobbers or floats or similar devices shall have the name and address of the person using the same legibly printed thereon or attached thereto.

(4) No tip-ups, bobbers or floats or similar devices shall be used unless they are personally attended.

(v) "Leadcore line" means a fishing line constructed with a metal core.

(w) "Minimum length" means the smallest total length of a species or species group that may be legally possessed, measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail unless otherwise specified. No person shall possess any fish less than the lengths specified and any fish less than the minimum length shall, without avoidable injury, be immediately returned to the water from which taken.

(x) "Possession limit" means the total number of fish of any species or species group that may be legally possessed by one person, either on the person, on the waters of the inland district, or the shores of such waters, or in any type of vehicle. Possession limit in the field shall not exceed the daily creel limit. Any fish in possession shall be intact to the extent that neither the heads nor the tails have been removed but gills and viscera may be removed. Possession limit shall not be construed to restrict the number of legally acquired fish that may be kept in storage in the home or in other storage facilities.

(y) "Scoop net" or "scap net" means a net attached to a handle which, for the purpose of this regulation, shall be not over thirty-six inches across the widest point of the single hoop or have a mesh bag more than thirty-six inches in depth at its deepest point. Such net shall be constructed of flexible mesh material and shall be manually operated by a single individual. The use of any such net constructed of metal mesh or stiff plastic mesh is prohibited.

(z) "Set line" means a line with one or both ends secured to the shore or to a fixed or buoyant object in the water which is used for fishing and is not personally attended. Set lines shall not be used in the inland district.

(aa) "Snagging" or "snatching" means the taking of fish by foul hooking, that is, hooking fish in any part of the body other than inside the mouth. Snagging or snatching is prohibited in all waters in the inland district for all species of fish and any fish so taken shall be released immediately, except, in streams open to fishing throughout the year, as provided in section 26-112-44 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, menhaden, alewives and blueback (glut) herring may be taken by snagging or snatching.

(bb) "Spearing" means the use of any pointed instrument, with or without barbs, which is propelled by hand. The use of spears is prohibited in lakes and ponds and in streams, or sections of streams, stocked with trout, [charr,] and salmon. Spears may be used only for taking carp, bowfin, tench, suckers, eels and sea lampreys. In the inland district, fish shall not be taken by underwater spear fishing and the use of any type of spear gun in fishing is prohibited.

(cc) "Strike indicator" means a brightly colored, highly visible tab, sleeve or bead or similar material used in fly fishing. Such devices may be attached to the line or leader when used in areas restricted to fly fishing only.

(dd) "Take" or "taking" means killing, capturing or otherwise rendering into possession, any fish or bait species, or attempting to kill, capture or render into possession, or assisting in taking or attempting to take any fish or bait species.

(ee) "Bubble float" means a type of float that is attached to a fishing line or leader and can be filled with water to adjust its buoyancy.

(ff) "Maximum length" means the largest total length of a species or species group that may be legally possessed, measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail unless otherwise

specified. No person shall possess any fish greater than the lengths specified and any fish greater than the maximum length shall, without avoidable injury, be immediately returned to the water from which taken.

(gg) “Tenkara fishing” is a traditional form of sport fishing and means angling with the use of a tenkara rod, tenkara line and a fly or flies, without the use of a reel of any type.

Summary of proposal: This proposed amendment will 1) update regulations to better address certain fishing methods (Tenkara fishing) and gear (bubble-floats), 2) establish a definition for maximum length, and 3) deletes the term “charr” to conform with provisions of a concurrent proposal (section 4).

Hearing testimony. Two individuals provided testimony at the public hearing. Keith Cagle, chairperson of the Connecticut Conservation Advisory Council, and also representing the Fairfield County League of Sportsmen and the Fairfield Fish and Game Association, spoke to indicate support for all six sections of proposed regulations. The second individual did not comment on this section.

Comments: The proposed amendment was endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). In written comments the FAC expressed support for this amendment, noting the need to clarify ambiguities and to recognize recently popularized fishing techniques and equipment. The FAC supported the elimination of the term “charr” as they felt that its use created “needless confusion.” The Connecticut Council of Trout Unlimited also commented in support of the inclusion of a definition for Tenkara. Two favorable comments and one unfavorable comment on this amendment were submitted either electronically or by mail. The unfavorable comment cited the increase in complexity of fisheries regulations due to the many revisions and additions such as more definitions. Several other commenters indicated they were not acquainted with the term “Tenkara” and the associated technique.

Additionally, the agency received seventeen submissions that indicated support or approval to all the proposed regulations, or all but one or two of the six sections of these proposed regulations. Sixteen of these submissions indicated support for this section. Conversely, five of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all sections of the proposed regulations including this section, several expressing concern that fisheries regulations were getting too complex.

Final Wording: As proposed.

Explanation and response to comments: This amendment is intended to address relatively new fishing techniques and interests, and eliminate confusion concerning salmonid species in Connecticut.

Relatively new to North America, “Tenkara” is a traditional Japanese method of fly fishing using a rod, Tenkara line and fly. No reel is used and the rod is typically longer than a regular fly

fishing rod. However, as no reel is used in Tenkara fishing, and the existing definition of “fly fishing” requires use of a reel, anglers wishing to fish Tenkara style are currently precluded from fishing trout waters designated as “fly fishing only.” This proposal would include Tenkara fishing as of form of fly fishing for regulatory purposes and allow Tenkara anglers to fish in “fly fishing only” areas.

“Bubble floats” are floats, often spherical or oval shaped, that can be filled with varying amounts of water to adjust their buoyancy and weight. They are often used to improve casting and enhance line placement or location. Most fishing regulations for broodstock Atlantic Salmon, including methods, are set by annual Commissioner’s Declarations. Several of the method restrictions, including requiring single free-swinging hooks and prohibiting additional weight from being added to the line, are intended to prevent anglers from snagging fish. Currently, this prohibition on additional weights being added to the line prevents the use of bubble floats, although their use would not facilitate snagging. Establishing a definition for “bubble float” would clarify the specific type of equipment that would be allowed should the legal methods for broodstock Atlantic Salmon be modified to include this one additional type of equipment.

A concurrent proposal (section 5, amending sec. 26-112-46) would establish another type of special management area, “Trophy Carp Waters”, where there would be a maximum length limit for Common Carp. Although existing regulations currently include definitions for minimum lengths and slot limits, there is no definition for maximum length. This proposal establishes the definition for “maximum length.”

Finally, a concurrent proposal (section 4, amending sec. 26-112-45) includes a technical change that simplifies regulatory language by eliminating the use of the term “charr” in reference to certain salmonid species (most notably Brook Trout) commonly identified as “trout”. This proposal makes conforming changes.

DEEP recognizes that the inland recreational fisheries regulations have become more complex as they are adapted to newer fishing techniques and gear, and to the expanding range of angler interests and preferences, while still providing adequate protections for the resource. However, DEEP believes that only by continuing to update fisheries regulations to keep pace with the evolution of fishing gear, techniques and preferences will the needs and wishes of its various constituencies be met and the resource protected.

Section 3. Section 26-112-44 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is amended to read as follows:

26-112-44. Closed seasons

(a) Streams. The closed season for fishing in streams shall be from midnight on the last day in February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, except as provided below:

(1) Streams open to fishing throughout the year. There shall be no closed season for fishing in the following streams, or portions thereof, as specified:

- (A) Coginchaug River, Middletown – downstream from Route 3 bridge to its junction with the Mattabassett River (Sebethe River).
- (B) Connecticut River and its coves.
- (C) Farmington River – downstream from the outlet of the Rainbow Dam Tailrace Canal to its confluence with the Connecticut River (all fishing is prohibited in the Rainbow Dam Tailrace Canal and in the Farmington River from the Tailrace Canal upstream to Rainbow Dam).
- (D) Housatonic River – downstream from the dam on Lake Housatonic (the Derby Dam).
- (E) Mattabasset River (Sebethe River), Middletown – downstream from the Route 372 bridge to its junction with the Connecticut River.
- (F) Mystic River, Groton and Stonington – downstream from the confluence of Whitfords Brook and Haleys Brook.
- (G) Naugatuck River – downstream from the Kinneytown Dam (Seymour) to its confluence with the Housatonic River.
- (H) Niantic River, East Lyme and Waterford.
- (I) Quinnipiac River – downstream from the highway bridge on Route 5 in North Haven to its junction with New Haven Harbor.
- (J) Salmon River, Haddam and East Haddam – downstream from the bridge on Route 151 to its junction with the Connecticut River.
- (K) Thames River and its coves, including the Shetucket River downstream from Greenville Dam and the Yantic River downstream of the falls at Indian Leap in Norwich.
- (2) Trout Management Areas. There shall be no closed season for fishing in Trout Management Areas listed in section 26-112-46(c) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies except as provided therein.
- (3) In areas where fishing for Atlantic salmon is allowed, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the closed season for Atlantic salmon fishing shall be as provided in section 26-112-45(c)(1) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.
- (4) Wild Trout Management Areas. Except as provided in section 26-112-46(g), the closed season for fishing in Wild Trout Management Areas shall be from midnight on the last day in February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.
- (5) Sea-run Trout Streams. Except as provided in section 26-112-46(j) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the closed season for fishing in Sea-run Trout Streams shall be from midnight on the last day in February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

(b) Lakes and Ponds. There shall be no closed season for fishing lakes and ponds, except as provided below.

(1) The closed season for fishing in the following lakes and ponds shall be from midnight on October thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Angus Parks Pond (Eastbury Park Pond), Glastonbury
Beaver Park Lagoon, New Haven
Bicentennial Pond (Mansfield Town Pond), Mansfield
Godfrey Pond, Stonington
[Green Falls Reservoir, Voluntown]
Hewitt Flyfishing Pond (Gallup Pond), North Stonington
Mohegan Lake, Fairfield
Pistol Shop Pond, Middlefield
Prospect Park Pond, Prospect
Shenipsit Reservoir, Ellington, Tolland, Vernon
Tollgate Ponds, Greenwich
Wononscopomuc Lake, Salisbury. Fishing hours shall be from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. prevailing time.

(2) The closed season for fishing in the following lakes and ponds shall be from midnight on the last day of February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

[Alexander Lake, Killingly]
Allen Brook Pond (Wharton Pond), Wallingford
Baldwins Pond, Meriden
Ball Pond, New Fairfield
Barber Pond, Bloomfield, Windsor
Bashan Lake, East Haddam
Baummer Pond, Naugatuck
Beach Pond, Voluntown and Rhode Island
Beachdale Pond, Voluntown
Beaver Brook Ponds (Upper and Lower), Windham
Bigelow Pond, Union
Billings Lake, North Stonington
Black Pond, Meriden, Middlefield
Black Pond, Woodstock
Black Rock Flood Control Impoundment, Watertown
Blanchard Pond, New Canaan, Wilton
Branford Supply Ponds, Branford
Broad Brook Mill Pond, East Windsor
Brookfield Pond, South Windsor
Cedar Lake, Chester
Clarks Pond, Hamden

Clarktown Pond, Orange
Cobbs Mill Pond, Weston
Colebrook Flood Control Impoundment, Colebrook, and Massachusetts
Day Pond, Colchester
Dayton Pond, Wallingford
Disbrow Pond, New Fairfield
Dodge Pond, East Lyme
Enders Pond, Granby
Factory Pond, Redding, Wilton
Fitchville Pond, Bozrah
Fort Shantok Pond, Montville
Fountain Lake, Seymour, Ansonia
Freshwater Pond, Enfield
Gardner Lake, Salem, Montville, Bozrah
Gay City Park Pond, Hebron
Gills Pond, Berlin
Green Falls Reservoir, Voluntown
Hallville Pond, Preston
Hancock Brook Flood Control Pool, Plymouth
Hanover Reservoir, Canterbury, Sprague
Hewitt Pond (Lower Hewitt Pond), North Stonington
Higganum Reservoir, Haddam
Hop Brook Flood Control Pool, Middlebury
Hopeville Pond, Griswold
Horse Pond, Salem
Howells Pond, Hartland
Johnson's Pond, Bolton
Keney Park Pond, Hartford
Lafayette Pond, Somers
Lake Stibbs, Southbury
Lake Wintergreen, Hamden
Lantern Hill Pond, Ledyard, North Stonington
Little Pond, Thompson
Long Pond, Ledyard, North Stonington
Lower Storrs Pumping Station Pond, Mansfield
Mad River Flood Control Impoundment, Winchester
Mansfield Training School Ponds, Mansfield
Mashapaug Lake, Union
Millers Pond, Durham
Millers Pond, Ridgefield
Mohawk Pond, Cornwall, Goshen
Moosup Pond, Plainfield
Mt. Tom Pond, Morris, Litchfield, Washington
Nells Rock Reservoir, Shelton

Northfield Brook Flood Control Pool, Litchfield
Norwich Pond, Lyme
Pages Millpond, North Branford
Paine Pond, Ashford
Pataconk Lake (Russell Jennings Pond), Chester
Picketts Pond (Osborndale State Park), Derby
Roseland Lake, Woodstock
Saint Martha's Pond, Enfield
Salmon Brook Pond, Glastonbury
Sawmill Park Pond, Ledyard
Schreeder Pond (Chatfield Hollow Pond), Killingworth
Scoville Reservoir, Wolcott
Shaw Lake (Hayward Lake), East Haddam
Silvermine Pond, New Canaan
Somerville Mill Pond, Somers
Southford Falls Pond, Oxford, Southbury
Starret Pond (Huntington Park Pond), Redding
Stillwater Pond, Torrington
Stratton Brook Park Pond, Simsbury
Taftville Reservoir, Norwich
Tankerhoosen Lakes, Vernon
Tungsten Mine Park Pond, Trumbull
Twin Brooks Park Pond, Trumbull
Tyler Pond, Goshen
Uncas Lake (Hog Pond), Lyme
Upper Fulton Park Pond, Waterbury
Valley Falls Pond, Vernon
Wangumbaug Lake (Coventry Lake), Coventry
Wards Millpond, Branford
Wauregan Reservoir (Quinebaug Lake), Killingly
West Branch Reservoir (Hogback), Hartland, Colebrook
West Side Pond, Goshen
Woodruffs Pond, Hamden
Wyassup Lake, North Stonington

(3) The closed season for fishing in the following lakes and ponds shall be as specified.

Bunnells Pond (Beardsley Park Pond), Bridgeport. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Great Hollow Pond, Monroe. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Isinglass Reservoir (Far Mill Reservoir), Shelton. From midnight on December thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Lake Chamberlain, Bethany. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Lake McDonough (Compensating Reservoir), New Hartford, Barkhamsted. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April. Fishing hours shall be from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. prevailing time, except opening day when fishing shall start at 6:00 a.m.

Lake Saltonstall, Branford, East Haven. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Maltby Lakes (#1, #2, #3), Orange West Haven. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Mohegan Park Pond, Norwich. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Pasture Pond (Quinebaug Valley Trout Hatchery), Plainfield. From midnight on September thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Saugatuck Reservoir, Easton, Redding, Weston. From midnight on December thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Shelton Reservoir #2, Shelton. From midnight on December thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Simsbury Town Park Ponds, Simsbury. From midnight on June fifteenth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

West Pequonnock Reservoir, Monroe. From midnight on December thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

(4) Children's Ponds. The closed season for fishing in the following posted children's ponds shall be from midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, except as specified.

Butternut Pond, East Windsor. Open season 6:00 a.m. second Saturday in April through October thirty-first.

Factory Pond, Salisbury

Gould Manor Pond, Fairfield

Helen Keller School Pond, Easton

Katz Pond, Trumbull
Mill Pond, Newington
Sochrin Pond, Seymour

(5) Trout Management Lakes. The closed season for fishing in Trout Management Lakes listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall be as specified therein.

(6) Boundary Waters. The closed season for fishing in boundary water listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall be as specified therein.

Summary of Proposal: This proposal would extend the open fishing season at one lake (Green Falls Reservoir), remove the closed season from one lake (Alexander Lake) and established a closed season on one lake (Baldwins Pond).

Hearing testimony. Two individuals provided testimony at the public hearing. Keith Cagle, chairperson of the Connecticut Conservation Advisory Council, and also representing the Fairfield County League of Sportsmen and the Fairfield Fish and Game Association, spoke to indicate support for all six sections of proposed regulations. The second individual did not comment on this section.

Comments: The proposed amendment was endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). No comments specifically citing this section were submitted electronically or by mail by individuals. One submission appears to express support for closed seasons in general, "I support the Deep's imposition in removing, shortening, or closing any season on any water body for fishing as necessary." Two commenters expressed opposition to closed seasons or regulations such as closed seasons, feeling that the proposed regulations reduce fishing opportunities or increase complexity. Additionally, the agency received seventeen submissions that indicated support or approval to all the proposed regulations, or all but one or two of the six sections of these proposed regulations. Seventeen of these submissions indicated support for this section. Conversely, five of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all sections of the proposed regulations including this section, several expressing concern that fisheries regulations were getting too complex.

Final Wording: As proposed.

Explanation and response: This proposal expands opportunities for anglers without any increase in complexity. The open season for fishing at Green Falls Reservoir currently runs from 6:00 am on the second Saturday in April through October 31 (inclusive). This extended closed season was likely due historically to the operation of a state-operated boat livery that focused fishing effort exclusively during the open-water season. However, there is no longer any need for an extended closed season at Green Falls Reservoir and the short open season does not meet current fisheries management objectives (providing as many fishing opportunities as possible). Late season fishing opportunities would include largemouth bass, sunfish and

bullheads. As the pond is stocked annually with trout in the spring, a closed season would be assigned from midnight on the last day of February to 6:00 am on the second Saturday in April.

Additionally, there is no longer a need for a closed season at Alexander Lake to protect stocked trout from harvest prior to Opening Day as DEEP no longer stocks it with trout. The public had historically been provided access to Alexander Lake via a private right-of-way and the lake had been stocked annually with trout by DEEP. After the passing of the long-time property owner, his successors decided to close the right-of-way to the public, leading the Inland Fisheries Division to terminate stocking trout into the lake.

Finally, Baldwins Pond (Meriden) has been stocked with trout since the 1990's, although regulations establishing a closed season for this water body were never promulgated. This proposal more fully protects stocked trout from harvest prior to Opening Day, enhancing the spring open water fishing experience, by adding Baldwins Pond to the list of lakes and ponds with a closed season.

Section 4. Section 26-112-45 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is amended to read as follows:

26-112-45. Species limitations

(a) Alewives (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) and blueback herring (*Alosa aestivalis*).

(1) Alewives and blueback herring may be taken only by angling or scoop net, except that in streams open to fishing throughout the year alewives and blueback herring may also be taken by snagging or snatching.

(2) The taking of alewives and blueback herring by scoop net from June sixteenth through March thirty-first, both dates inclusive, is prohibited.

(3) In rivers and streams, the taking of alewives and blueback herring by angling and snagging or snatching from June sixteenth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April is prohibited.

(4) The taking of alewives and blueback herring from the section of Brides Brook, East Lyme, extending from the dam at Brides Pond downstream to Brides Brook Road is prohibited.

(5) Alewives and blueback herring shall not be taken from Saturday 12:00 midnight to Tuesday 12:00 midnight except in lakes and ponds, the main body of the Connecticut River, the main body of the Housatonic River, and the main body of the Thames River including the Shetucket River to the base of the Greenville Dam.

(6) The daily creel limit for alewives and blueback herring shall be twenty-five in the aggregate.

(b) American shad (*Alosa sapidissima*) and hickory shad (*Alosa mediocris*).

(1) American shad and hickory shad may be taken only by angling.

(2) The daily creel limit for American shad and hickory shad shall be six fish of both species in the aggregate, except as provided in subdivision (3) of this subsection.

(3) In all areas of the inland district except for the Connecticut River and those portions of its tributaries open to fishing throughout the year, as provided in section 26-112-44(a)(1) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the daily creel limit for American shad shall be zero, and all American shad caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of American shad on the waters or on the shores of the inland district, except for the waters and shores of the Connecticut River and those portions of its tributaries open to fishing throughout the year as provided in section 26-112-44(a)(1) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, is prohibited.

(4) The open season for taking American shad from the Pawcatuck River, North Stonington-Stonington-Rhode Island, shall be as provided by Rhode Island regulations authorized by section 20-1-12 of the General Laws of Rhode Island.

(c) Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*)

(1) The taking of Atlantic salmon is prohibited, except that the Commissioner may, by an annual declaration, allow the taking of Atlantic salmon during a specified period in specified waters as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection shall inform the public of open seasons and angling regulations for Atlantic salmon by annually issuing a news release, posting signs, and by printing notice in the anglers' guide.

(2) During any period during which the taking of Atlantic salmon is allowed, the Commissioner may, by declaration, specify the angling methods allowed for the taking of Atlantic salmon.

(3) During any period during which the taking of Atlantic salmon is allowed, the Commissioner may, by declaration, specify the daily creel limit and the minimum length for Atlantic salmon.

(4) The taking of Atlantic salmon in the main stem Connecticut River shall be as provided by regulations of the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission, as authorized by Chapter 494 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

(d) Bait species. Bait species include the following species of fish, amphibians, aquatic insects and crustaceans to the exclusion of all other species: golden shiner or "pond shiner"

(*Notemigonus crysoleucas*), common shiner (*Luxilus cornutus*), fallfish (*Semotilus corporalis*), creek chub (*Semotilus atromaculatus*), spottail shiner or "river bait" (*Notropis hudsonius*), blacknose dace (*Rhinichthys atratulus*), longnose dace (*Rhinichthys cataractae*), pearl dace (*Semotilus margarita*), bluntnose minnow (*Pimephales notatus*), fathead minnow (*Pimephales promelas*), cutlips minnow (*Exoglossum maxillingua*), chub sucker (*Erimyzon oblongus*), white sucker (*Catostomus commersoni*), banded killifish (*Fundulus diaphanus*), mummichug (*Fundulus heteroclitus*), striped killifish (*Fundulus majalis*), tidewater silverside (*Menidia beryllina*), Atlantic silverside (*Menidia menidia*), sand lance or "sand eels" (*Ammodytes* spp.), frogs (except the northern leopard frog, *Rana pipiens*), crayfish (except rusty crayfish, *Orconectes rusticus*), perch bugs, helgramites, and mayfly nymphs. Bait species may be taken only for personal use as bait and food, except as provided in section 26-55-5 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, and shall not be sold or offered for sale, except as provided in sections 26-142a-1 to 26-142a-6 inclusive, 26-142a-12 and 26-142a-15 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(1) Bait species may be taken by bait seine, bait trap, umbrella net, by hand, by scoop net and by angling, as provided below:

(A) In all inland waters, except those lakes and ponds where the use of fish (dead or alive) as bait is prohibited, bait species may be taken at any time by bait traps not to exceed twenty inches in length and fifteen inches in diameter and by umbrella nets not to exceed four feet in length by four feet in width.

(B) In all streams bait species may be taken at any time with bait seines not to exceed fifteen feet in length and four feet in depth. Bait seines shall not be used in lakes and ponds, except in those lakes and ponds designated by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection as open to the commercial taking of bait. In such lakes and ponds bait seines not exceeding fifteen feet in length and four feet in width may be used to take bait species at any time of year.

(C) During the open season for fishing in inland waters, bait species may also be taken by hand, by scoop net and by angling.

(e) Black bass. Black bass include largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*) and smallmouth bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*).

(1) Black bass may be taken only by angling and ice fishing.

(2) The daily creel limit for black bass shall be six, except in Boundary Waters and Bass Management Areas as specified in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and except as specified in section 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(3) There shall be no minimum length for black bass taken in streams, except in the Connecticut River, and its coves, where the minimum length shall be twelve inches. The minimum length for black bass taken in lakes and ponds shall be twelve inches, except in Boundary Waters and Bass Management Areas as specified in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State

Agencies and except as specified in section 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(f) [Carp] Common carp (Cyprinus carpio), bowfin (Amia calva), tench (Tinca tinca), white suckers (Catostomus commersoni), American eels (Anguilla rostrata), and sea lampreys (Petromyzon marinus).

(1) [Carp] Common carp, bowfin, tench, suckers, eels and sea lampreys may be taken by angling, bobbing, ice fishing, bow and arrow fishing and spearing, except that, in streams or sections of streams stocked with trout[, charr and/or] or salmon, these species may be taken only by angling or ice fishing. Spearing is prohibited in all lakes and ponds.

(2) The daily creel limit for American eel shall be twenty-five.

(3) The minimum length for American eel shall be nine inches.

(4) The daily creel limit for common carp shall be five, not more than one of which may exceed thirty inches in length, except in Trophy Carp Waters as specified in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. The commissioner may grant an exemption from the daily creel limit or length requirements specified for common carp in this subsection to any person issued a permit under section 26-112-42 to conduct a fishing tournament or derby provided that all fish caught shall be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters where taken.

(g) Chain pickerel (Esox niger).

(1) Chain pickerel may be taken only by angling or ice fishing

(2) There shall be no daily creel limit for chain pickerel taken in streams and the daily creel limit for chain pickerel taken in lakes and ponds shall be six, except in Boundary Waters as specified in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(3) There shall be no minimum length for chain pickerel taken in streams and the minimum length for chain pickerel taken in lakes and ponds shall be fifteen inches, except in Boundary Waters as specified in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(h) Northern pike (Esox lucius).

(1) Northern pike may be taken only by angling and ice fishing.

(2) The taking of northern pike from March first through April thirtieth, both dates inclusive, is prohibited in Bantam Lake, Little Pond (Little Bantam Lake), and their tributaries, Litchfield-Morris.

(3) The daily creel limit for northern pike shall be two, except that, during the period December first through the last day of February, the daily creel limit for northern pike in Bantam Lake, Little Pond (Little Bantam Lake), and their tributaries, Litchfield-Morris, shall be one.

(4) The minimum length for northern pike shall be twenty-six inches, except that in the Connecticut River and its coves the minimum length for northern pike shall be twenty four inches and, during the period December first through the last day of February, the minimum length for northern pike in Bantam Lake, Little Pond (Little Bantam Lake), and their tributaries, Litchfield-Morris, shall be thirty-six inches.

(i) Panfish. Panfish include yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*), white perch (*Morone americana*), calico bass (*Pomoxis* spp.), rock bass (*Ambloplites rupestris*), [all species of catfish including bullheads (*Ictalurus* spp.),] and all species of sunfish (*Lepomis* spp.) except banded sunfish (*Enneacanthus obesus*). Panfish may be taken only by angling, bobbing and ice fishing.

(j) Smelt (*Osmerus mordax*)

(1) Smelt may be taken in lakes and ponds only by angling and ice fishing.

(2) The taking of smelt in rivers and streams is prohibited.

(3) The daily creel limit for smelt taken in lakes and ponds shall be fifty fish.

(k) Striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*) regulations governing the taking and possession of striped bass in the inland district shall be as specified in sections 26-159a-2, 26-159a-4, 26-159a-7, and 26-159a-20 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(l) Sturgeon (*Acipenser* spp.). The taking of sturgeon is prohibited.

(m) Trout[, charr] and kokanee. Trout[, charr] and kokanee include brown trout (*Salmo trutta*), rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), lake trout (*Savelinus namaycush*), kokanee (*Oncorhynchus nerka*), and their hybrids.

(1) Trout[, charr] and kokanee may be taken only by angling and ice fishing.

(2) The taking of trout[, charr] and kokanee from March first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April is prohibited, except: in boundary waters, Trout Management Areas, Wild Trout Management Areas, Sea-run Trout Streams and Trout Management Lakes as listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies as specified therein; in streams open to fishing throughout the year as listed in section 26-112-44 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and as specified in section 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(3) The daily creel limit for trout[, charr] and kokanee shall be eight in the aggregate, not more than five of which may be trout [or charr] and not more than five may be kokanee except: in boundary waters, Trout Management Areas, Wild Trout Management Areas, Trout Parks, Sea-Run Trout Streams, Trophy Trout Streams and Trout Management Lakes as listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies as specified therein; in streams open to fishing throughout the year as listed in section 26-112-44 and as specified in section 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(4) The minimum length for lake trout shall be twenty inches.

(5) There shall be no minimum length for trout (except lake trout)[, charr] and kokanee except:

(A) In Trout Management Lakes, Wild Trout Management Areas, Trophy Trout Streams, Sea-Run Trout Streams and Trout Management Areas listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies as specified therein.

(B) In streams open to fishing throughout the year listed in section 26-112-44 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies where the minimum length shall be fifteen inches.

(C) In the following streams, or portions of the streams, where the minimum length of trout [and charr] shall be nine inches:

Belden Brook, Hartland, Granby- that portion downstream from Fuller Road in Hartland.

Blackledge River, Glastonbury, Marlborough- that portion downstream from Route 94.

Burlington Brook, Burlington- that portion downstream from Covey Road.

Center Brook, Colebrook- that portion downstream from Route 183.

Cherry Brook, Canton- that portion downstream from Route 179.

Colebrook Brook, Winchester, Colebrook.

Dickinson Creek, Colchester, Marlborough- that portion downstream from Route 66.

East Branch Salmon Brook, Granby- that portion downstream from the Connecticut-Massachusetts state line.

East Branch Eightmile River, Salem, East Haddam, Lyme- that portion downstream from Witch Meadow Road in Salem.

East Branch Farmington River, Barkhamsted, New Hartford– that portion downstream from the dam at Lake McDonough.

Eightmile River, East Haddam, Lyme- that portion from Foxtown Road downstream to the dam at Mt. Archer Road.

Farmington River, Farmington, Avon, Simsbury, East Granby, Bloomfield, Windsor- that portion downstream from Route 177.

Fawn Brook, Marlborough, Hebron- that portion downstream from Slocum Road.

Indian Meadow Brook, Winchester.

Jeremy River, Colchester- that portion downstream from Greyville Road.

Judd Brook, Colchester, Hebron- that portion downstream from Old Colchester Road.

Mad River, Norfolk, Winchester- that portion downstream from Grantville Road in Norfolk.

Meadow Brook, Colchester- that portion downstream from Route 16.

Mill Brook, Winchester- that portion downstream from Hannifin Road.

Morgan Brook, Barkhamsted- that portion downstream from the dam on West Hill Pond.

Mountain Brook, Granby- that portion downstream from the Route 20 bridge located between the Route 20 intersections with Case Street and Enders Road.

Pequabuck River, Plymouth, Bristol, Plainville, Farmington - that portion downstream from Canal Street in Plymouth.

Pine Brook, East Hampton, Haddam- that section downstream from Sexton Road in East Hampton.

Ratlum Brook, Canton, New Hartford- that portion downstream from the confluence with Spruce Brook.

Raymond Brook, Hebron- that portion downstream from Old Colchester Road.

Safstrom Brook, East Hampton- that portion downstream from Tartia Road.

Salmon River, Colchester, East Hampton, East Haddam, Haddam- that portion from the confluence of the Blackledge and Jeremy rivers downstream to Route 151.

Salmon Brook, East Granby, Granby.

Sandy Brook, Colebrook, Norfolk- that portion downstream from the Connecticut-Massachusetts state line.

Still River, Barkhamsted, Colebrook- that portion downstream from the confluence with the Mad River.

West Branch of Fawn Brook, Marlborough, Hebron- that portion downstream from Slocum Road.

West Branch of Salmon Brook, Granby- that portion downstream from Route 179.

(n) Any fish or bait species taken contrary to this section shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken.

(o) Marine finfish. Unless otherwise specified by this section, the species limitations for marine finfish taken by sport fishing from the waters of this state shall be as specified in regulations adopted under authority of section 26-159a of the Connecticut General Statutes.

(p) Walleye (*Sander vitreus*).

(1) Walleye may be taken only by angling and ice fishing.

(2) The daily creel limit for walleye shall be two.

(3) The minimum length for walleye shall be eighteen inches except that in Lake Pocotopaug, East Hampton, the minimum length for walleye shall be twenty inches.

(q) Banded sunfish (*Enneacanthus obesus*). The taking of banded sunfish is prohibited.

(r) American brook lamprey (*Lethenteron appendix*). The taking of American brook lamprey is prohibited.

(s) Catfish and bullheads.

(1) All species of catfish (*Ameiurus* spp. and *Ictalurus* spp.), including bullheads, may be taken by hand, angling, bobbing and ice fishing.

(2) The daily creel limit for channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*) and white catfish (*Ameiurus catus*) shall be six fish of both species in the aggregate, except as provided in subdivision (3) of this subsection.

(3) The daily creel limit for channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*) and white catfish (*Ameiurus catus*) shall be three fish in the following lakes and ponds:
Beaver Park Lagoon, New Haven

Birge Pond, Bristol
Bunnells Pond (Beardsley Park Pond), Bridgeport
Center Springs Park Pond, Manchester
Freshwater Pond, Enfield
Keeney Park Pond, Hartford
Lake Wintergreen, Hamden
Lakewood Lake, Waterbury
Mirror Lake (Hubbard Park Pond), Meriden
Picketts Pond, Derby
Rowans Pond (Butternut Park Pond), Middletown
Mohegan Park Pond (Spaulding Pond), Norwich
Stanley Quarter Pond, New Britain

Summary of proposal: This proposal establishes daily creel limits for channel catfish and common carp to protect both species from overharvest and to better allocate the harvest of these fish for the overall betterment of the angling public. Additionally, the number of larger common carp (length > 30 inches) that can be taken would be limited to one fish per day to maintain adequate populations of the larger fish that are targeted by a growing population of avid catch-and-release carp anglers. A technical change is also made that simplifies regulatory language by eliminating the use of the term “charr” in reference to certain salmonid species (most notably Brook Trout) commonly identified as “trout”.

Hearing testimony. Two individuals provided testimony at the public hearing. Keith Cagle, chairperson of the Connecticut Conservation Advisory Council, and also representing the Fairfield County League of Sportsmen and the Fairfield Fish and Game Association, spoke to indicate support for all six sections of proposed regulations. The second individual did not comment on this section.

Comments: The proposed amendment was endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). In written comments the FAC expressed support for the provisions amending the regulations concerning Common Carp and catfish. They also supported the elimination of the term “charr” as they felt that its use created “...*needless confusion.*” One individual representing a fishing events business concern (Carp Tournament Series LLC) based in Oklahoma commented in support of protecting “trophy carp”.

Two individual commenters indicated support for the amendment concerning catfish (establishing creel limits). One individual submitted unfavorable comments concerning regulation of catfish, stating “...*and remove catfish species from "panfish" thereby lowering the keepable limit. We do NOT need more restrictions and regulations.*” One other individual questioned the need for the regulation in a manner suggesting opposition: “*Why regulate catfish creel limits? What kind of an idiot would eat a fish from fresh water????*”

Seventy-six individual commenters expressed support for the carp provisions (establishing statewide creel limits for carp) in this section and in section 5 (establishing specially designated

Trophy Carp Waters with alternative regulations). One of these comments included a request to prohibit bow fishing statewide. All of the favorable comments contained similar sentiments concerning the projected benefits of promoting and managing a carp fishery and many (forty-four) of the favorable comments included a standard statement within their comments: *“I support the CT Fishery proposals for Amendment to Section 26-112-45 & creation of certain Trophy Carp Waters. Catch & Release angling for Trophy sized Common carp (including mirror and other scale patterns) is growing rapidly and providing significant economic stimulus to businesses in CT. This step by CT DEEP Fisheries creates a far sighted opportunity to help protect trophy carp that will ultimately attract more anglers to CT.”* Nine of the individual commenters in support of the proposed regulations for Common Carp noted an affiliation with the Carp Anglers Group, a national carp fishing organization. Although it is difficult to determine the residency status of commenters, at least one of the favorable comments originated in the United Kingdom, one was submitted by a Texas resident, and one was from a Georgia resident.

Six unfavorable comments were submitted concerning the proposed regulations for common carp, of which five considered common carp to be non-native and invasive or have very invasive tendencies and therefore should not be protected. Two of the unfavorable comments, one from a member of the Bowfishing Association of America, expressed concern that length limits for common carp would limit bow hunting opportunities.

Additionally, the agency received seventeen submissions that indicated support or approval to all the proposed regulations, or all but one or two of the six sections of these proposed regulations. Seventeen of these submissions indicated support for this section. Conversely, five of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all sections of the proposed regulations including this section, several expressing concern that fisheries regulations were getting too complex.

Final Wording: As proposed.

Explanation and response to comments: This proposal is intended to protect Channel Catfish and Common Carp from overharvest and to better allocate the harvest of these fish for the overall betterment of the angling public. This proposal is intended to eliminate confusion concerning the salmonid species in Connecticut

Channel catfish are a very popular sport and food fish throughout the country. Connecticut’s only significant population of self-reproducing channel catfish is found in the Connecticut River where they support a highly popular fishery. In 2007, DEEP began stocking channel catfish to develop additional fisheries for this large gamefish that could provide good summer fishing opportunities across the state. Currently, 15,000 to 17,000 channel catfish are stocked annually into twenty-four lakes and ponds each year. The catfish that are stocked are purchased using funding from sportsmen from commercial hatcheries located in Arkansas. As channel catfish typically do not successfully reproduce in smaller lakes, the catfish populations in the stocked waters are generally not self-sustaining, and must rely on periodic stockings.

Two sizes of channel catfish are stocked. Smaller fish, averaging 9-12 inches in length are stocked into ten lakes scattered throughout the state as a cost-effective “put-and-grow” fishery

where the stocked fish will grow into more preferred catchable size for future years. Larger fish, averaging 12-18 inches in length are intended to provide an immediate fishery and are stocked into a number of smaller ponds located in or near urban areas to help provide local fishing opportunities in these areas.

Following ten years of stockings, the fishery has developed and become more popular, with increasing numbers of anglers targeting catfish. Establishing regulations limiting the number of fish that can be taken by each individual will conserve the resource and maintain fishing opportunities for the most anglers. This proposal would establish a statewide daily creel limit of six fish per day and a more restricted daily creel limit of three fish per day at the waters stocked with the larger catfish that is intended to spread the catch out and provide fishing opportunities to more anglers.

Several commenters expressed concern that fisheries regulations were getting too complex. DEEP recognizes that the inland recreational fisheries regulations have become more complex as they are adapted to newer fishing techniques and gear, and to the expanding range of angler interests and preferences, while still providing adequate protections for the resource. However, DEEP believes that only by continuing to update fisheries regulations for species like catfish to keep pace with the evolution of fishing gear, techniques and preferences will the needs and wishes of its various constituencies be met and the resources protected.

The common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) is Connecticut's largest freshwater fish, with individuals reaching 40 to 50 lbs. in weight (the current state record is 43.75 lbs., but it is likely that larger individuals exist in Connecticut waters). Although popular in Europe for decades, shore-based catch-and-release carp fishing is just beginning to develop a strong and passionate following in the United States. Carp provide a great opportunity to grow a niche fishery here in CT, and to also generate more overall excitement for recreational fishing in our state. This type of carp fishing has the potential to enhance tourism in the state by attracting avid anglers from throughout the United States and from various foreign countries. These regulations are intended to preserve the resource and maintain the numbers of larger fish that are the preferred target for the emerging shore-based catch-and-release carp fishery.

DEEP recognizes that Common Carp are not native to Connecticut (or to North America for that matter) but notes that a number of other currently popular Connecticut game fishes including Largemouth, Smallmouth Bass, Rainbow Trout, and Northern Pike are also not native to Connecticut, and some, most notably are not native to North America. All provide numerous fishing opportunities and are occupying important niches in this state's current aquatic ecosystems.

Although in parts of both their North American and European ranges, the negative impacts (such as extreme population sizes, high levels of turbidity, and massive loss of habitat for other species) on aquatic ecosystems by Common Carp are well documented, in other areas of their ranges, these same negative impacts are not observed. Such is the case in Connecticut, where although very noticeable during spawning congregations, Common Carp do not reach the dense populations that can impact aquatic ecosystems and extreme habitat modifications are simply not observed.

DEEP also recognizes that a small, but active constituency of bow anglers exists in Connecticut, and that a size-related statewide creel limit (five fish per day, only one of which can be greater than thirty inches in length) may inhibit bow fishing by limiting the number of carp, especially the large, more easily targeted fish, that can be harvested. DEEP believes that the impact of the proposed regulations to bow anglers would be limited (smaller carp and several other species can be targeted) and the benefits would be greater, with the resource being further protected and a relatively new, but growing, fishery being enhanced.

Section 5. Section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is amended to read as follows:

26-112-46. Special management areas

(a) Boundary Waters. Boundary waters are defined as those lakes and ponds forming a common boundary between Connecticut and an adjoining state. Connecticut sport fishing regulations shall apply, except as provided herein.

(1) Beach Pond, Voluntown - Rhode Island. The closed season for fishing shall be from midnight on the last day in February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April. Connecticut or Rhode Island fishing license legal on entire pond. Connecticut and Rhode Island regulations apply as follows: Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be twelve inches. Chain pickerel: the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be fourteen inches. Trout: the daily creel limit shall be five and there shall be no minimum length. Not more than six tip-ups may be used when ice fishing.

(2) Breakneck Pond, Union-Massachusetts. Connecticut or Massachusetts license legal on entire pond.

(3) Colebrook Flood Control Impoundment. The closed season for fishing shall be from midnight on the last day in February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April. Connecticut or Massachusetts fishing license legal on entire impoundment. Upstream demarcation line posted by Massachusetts.

(4) Congamond Lakes (South Pond, Middle Pond and North Pond), Suffield - Massachusetts. There shall be no closed season for fishing. Connecticut or Massachusetts fishing license legal on all three lakes. Massachusetts regulations apply as follows: Trout: the daily creel limit shall be six, during the period from the Saturday next preceding the third Monday in April, one hour before sunrise, through the Sunday following the third Saturday in October. Trout: the daily creel limit shall be three, during the period from the Monday following the third Saturday in October to the Saturday preceding the third Monday in April. Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be ten inches. Chain pickerel: the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be fourteen

inches. Not more than two hooks may be used during periods of open water fishing and not more than five hooks may be used when ice fishing.

(5) Hamilton Reservoir, Union - Massachusetts. There shall be no closed season for fishing. Connecticut or Massachusetts fishing license legal on entire pond. Massachusetts regulations apply as follows: Trout: the daily creel limit shall be six, during the period from the Saturday next preceding the third Monday in April, one hour before sunrise, through the Sunday following the third Saturday in October. Trout: the daily creel limit shall be three, during the period from the Monday following the third Saturday in October to the Saturday preceding the third Monday in April. Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be ten inches. Chain pickerel: the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be fourteen inches. Not more than two hooks may be used during periods of open water fishing and not more than five hooks may be used when ice fishing.

(6) Hazard Pond, Voluntown - Rhode Island. No closed season. Connecticut or Rhode Island fishing license legal on entire pond. Connecticut and Rhode Island regulations apply as follows: Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be twelve inches. Chain pickerel: the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be fourteen inches. Not more than six tip-ups may be used when ice fishing.

(7) Indian Pond, Sharon -New York. The closed season for fishing shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April. Connecticut or New York license legal on entire pond. New York regulations apply as follows: Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the closed season for the taking of black bass shall be from midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit shall be six and the minimum length shall be twelve inches. Not more than five tip-ups and two hand held jigs may be used for ice fishing.

(8) Keach Pond, Thompson - Putnam - Rhode Island. Connecticut or Rhode Island license legal on entire pond. Rhode Island regulations apply.

(9) Killingly Pond, Killingly - Rhode Island. No closed season. Connecticut or Rhode Island fishing license legal on entire pond. Connecticut and Rhode Island regulations apply as follows: Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be twelve inches. Chain pickerel: the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be fourteen inches. Not more than six tip-ups may be used when ice fishing.

(10) Muddy Pond, Woodstock-Massachusetts. Connecticut or Massachusetts fishing license legal on entire pond.

(11) Perry Pond, Thompson - Massachusetts. Connecticut or Massachusetts fishing license legal on entire pond.

(b) Fly Fishing Only Areas. In the following waters or portions thereof, as indicated by posters, fishing is restricted to fly fishing only.

Bantam River (outlet), Morris, Litchfield.

Hewitt Flyfishing Pond (Gallup Pond), North Stonington.

Housatonic River, Cornwall, Sharon.

Moosup River, Plainfield.

Salmon River, Colchester.

Saugatuck River, Westport, from Dorr's Mill Dam to Merritt Parkway.

Willimantic River, Tolland, Willington

Yantic River, Lebanon, above Johnsons Bridge and Bozrah.

(c) Trout Management Areas.

(1) The Housatonic River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Housatonic River in Salisbury, Canaan, Sharon, and Cornwall from the bridge at Route 112 downstream to the bridge at Routes 4 and 7. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in the Housatonic River Trout Management Area, except that those portions of this trout management area within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of tributary streams shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive. Fishing within a portion of the Housatonic River Trout Management Area as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is restricted to fly fishing only. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] in the Housatonic River Trout Management Area is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Housatonic River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(2) The Willimantic River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Willimantic River in Tolland and Willington from the mouth of Roaring Brook downstream to the bridge at Route 74. Fishing in the Willimantic River Trout Management Area is restricted to fly fishing only. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in the Willimantic River Trout Management Area. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] in the Willimantic River Trout Management Area is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Willimantic River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(3) The Mianus River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Mianus River in Stamford, from Merrybrook Road to the dam approximately one mile upstream, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in this area and the minimum length for trout [and charr] taken shall be nine inches. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, fishing in this area is restricted to single hook flies and artificial lures only, the daily creel

limit for trout [and charr] is zero, and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Mianus River Trout Management Area is prohibited. From 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first, the daily creel limit in the Mianus River Trout Management Area for any combination of trout [and charr] is two.

(4) The Farmington River Trout Management Area shall be the West Branch Farmington River in Hartland, Barkhamsted, and New Hartford and that portion of the Farmington River from the junction of the East and West Branches of the Farmington River in New Hartford downstream to the Route 177 Bridge in Unionville. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in the Farmington River Trout Management Area except that those portions of this trout management area from the intersection of Hogback Road and Route 20 in Hartland, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, downstream to the gas pipeline crossing approximately four-tenths miles downstream of the confluence with the Still River in Barkhamsted, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, shall be closed to all fishing during the period April first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April. The daily creel limits for trout [and charr] in the Farmington River Trout Management Area shall be as follows:

(A) In that portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area from the Goodwin Dam in Hartland downstream to the foot bridge abutments approximately one and four-tenths miles downstream of the confluence with the Still River in Barkhamsted, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] in any combination shall be two and the minimum length for any trout [and charr] taken shall be twelve inches during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first. During said time period, possession of trout [or charr] less than twelve inches or possession of more than two trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of this portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(B) In that portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area from the foot bridge abutments approximately one and four-tenths miles downstream of the confluence with the Still River in Barkhamsted, downstream to the bridge at Route 219 in New Hartford, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, fishing is restricted to the use of barbless hooks only, the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of this portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(C) In that portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area from the bridge at Route 219 in New Hartford downstream to the Route 177 Bridge in Unionville, the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] in any combination shall be two and the minimum length for any trout [and charr] taken shall be twelve inches during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first. During said time period, possession of trout [or charr] less than twelve inches or possession of more than two trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of this portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(5) The Hammonasset River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Hammonasset River in Killingworth and Madison, from the Lake Hammonasset Dam downstream to Chestnut Hill Road. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Hammonasset River Trout Management Area is prohibited. From 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in August, the daily creel limit in the Hammonasset River Trout Management Area for any combination of trout [and charr] is two and the minimum length for any such trout [and charr] taken shall be nine inches.

(6) The Mill River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Mill River in Fairfield, from the Merritt Parkway Bridge downstream to Lake Mohegan. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in [this area and the minimum length for trout and charr taken shall be nine inches. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April,] the Mill River Trout Management Area. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. [During said time period from September first through 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April possession] Possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Mill River Trout Management Area is prohibited. [From 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first, the daily creel limit in the Mill River Trout Management Area for any combination of trout and charr is two.].

(7) The Moosup River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Moosup River in Plainfield from the bridge at Route 14 downstream to the junction with the Quinebaug River. Fishing within a portion of the Moosup River Trout Management Area as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is restricted to fly fishing only. There shall be no closed season for trout in the Moosup River Trout Management Area. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] in the Moosup River Trout Management Area is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the

waters from which taken. Possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Moosup River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(8) The Salmon River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Salmon River in Colchester and East Hampton, from the junction of the Blackledge and Jeremy Rivers downstream to the Route 16 bridge. Fishing within a portion of the Salmon River Trout Management Area is restricted to fly fishing only as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. There shall be no closed season for trout in the Salmon River Trout Management Area. From 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in August, the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] in any combination shall be two and the minimum length for any trout [and charr] taken shall be nine inches. From September first to 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Salmon River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(9) The Naugatuck River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Naugatuck River from Route 118 in Harwinton and Litchfield, downstream to the Thomaston Dam in Thomaston. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in the Naugatuck River Trout Management Area, except that those portions of this trout management area within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of tributary streams shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive. From October first through March thirty-first, fishing is restricted to those methods specified by the Commissioner for the taking of Atlantic salmon in accordance with section 26-112-45(c) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Naugatuck River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(10) The Bulls Bridge Trout Management Area shall consist of (A) the portion of the Housatonic River from Bulls Bridge Dam downstream to the Gaylordsville Bridge (Route 7) and (B) the Ten Mile River from the New York State border downstream to the confluence with the Housatonic River. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in the Bulls Bridge Trout Management Area, except that those portions of this trout management area within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of tributary streams shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Bulls Bridge Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(11) The William Doc Skerlick Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Saugatuck River in Westport from the Dorr's Mill Dam to the Merritt Parkway bridge. Fishing within the William Doc Skerlick Trout Management Area is restricted to fly fishing only. There shall be no closed season for trout and [or charr] in this area. From 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first, the daily creel limit in the William Doc Skerlick Trout Management Area for any combination of trout [and charr] is two and the minimum length for trout [and charr] taken shall be nine inches. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the William Doc Skerlick Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(12) The Hockanum River Trout Management Area shall be the portion of the Hockanum River from I-84 in Vernon downstream to where the river crosses under I-84 at the Manchester/East Hartford town line as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in the Hockanum River Trout Management Area. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Hockanum River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(13) The Pequabuck River Trout Management Area shall consist of (A) that portion of the Pequabuck River in Bristol and Plainville from King Street (Route 229 & 72) downstream to Route 177 and (B) that portion of Coppermine Brook in Bristol from Artisan Street downstream to the confluence with the Pequabuck River. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in the Pequabuck River Trout Management Area. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Pequabuck River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(14) The Yantic River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Yantic River from Barstow Road in Lebanon, downstream to the bridge crossing at the intersection of Fitchville Road and Schwartz Road in Bozrah. Fishing within portions of the Yantic River Trout Management Area as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is restricted to fly fishing only. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in this area. From 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first, the daily creel limit in the Yantic River Trout Management Area for any combination of trout [and charr] is two and the minimum length for trout [and charr] taken shall be nine inches. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Yantic River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(15) The Upper Saugatuck River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Saugatuck River in Redding from Diamond Hill Pond Dam downstream to Saugatuck Reservoir, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in the Upper Saugatuck River Trout Management Area. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Upper Saugatuck River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(16) The Aspetuck River Trout Management Area shall consist of (A) that portion of the Aspetuck River in Easton, Redding and Newtown upstream from the bridge at Valley Road in Easton and (B) those portions of the unnamed inflow and outflow streams to Lyons Swamp in Easton and Redding from North Park Avenue downstream to the confluence with the Aspetuck River. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in the Aspetuck River Trout Management Area. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Aspetuck River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(17) The Sleeping Giant Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Mill River within Sleeping Giant State Park located between Tuttle Avenue and Mount Carmel Avenue, Hamden. There shall be no closed season for trout [and charr] in the Sleeping Giant Trout Management Area and the minimum length for trout [and charr] taken shall be nine inches. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April possession of trout [or charr] in the waters or on the shores of the Sleeping Giant Trout Management Area is prohibited. From 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first, the daily creel limit in the Sleeping Giant Trout Management Area for any combination of trout [and charr] is two.

(d) Trout Management Lakes. In the following lakes during the period March first through March thirty-first the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] shall be one and the minimum length limit shall be sixteen inches, except as otherwise specified herein. For the purposes of this subsection “slot limit lengths” shall mean the lengths between which fish may not be retained and all fish equal to or greater than the lower limit but less than the upper limit must be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken.

(1) Amos Lake, Preston. The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

(2) Candlewood Lake (including Squantz Pond), New Fairfield, Danbury, New Milford, Sherman, Brookfield. The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

(3) Crystal Lake, Ellington, Stafford. The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April. During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February, the slot limit lengths for trout [and charr] shall be from twelve inches to sixteen inches total length and the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may equal or exceed sixteen inches in total length.

(4) East Twin Lake, Salisbury. The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

(5) Highland Lake, Winchester. The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April. During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February, the slot limit lengths for trout [and charr] shall be from twelve inches to sixteen inches total length and the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may equal or exceed sixteen inches in total length.

(6) Quonnipaug Lake, Guilford. The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

(7) Rogers Lake, Lyme, Old Lyme. The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

(8) West Hill Pond, New Hartford, Barkhamsted. The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

(e) Special use of streams by disabled persons. The Department of Environmental Protection is authorized to set aside sections of streams for temporary use by groups of disabled persons from state institutions, veteran or similar organizations, upon written request, and under conditions as specified by the department.

(f) Bass Management Areas. In addition to the provisions of section 26-112-45, the following provisions shall apply in the following listed waters. For the purposes of this subsection, “slot limit lengths” are the lengths between which fish may not be retained. Measurements shall be from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail and all fish equal to or greater than the lower length limit and less than the upper length limit shall be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken.

(1) The slot limit lengths for black bass shall be from twelve to sixteen inches in length and the daily creel limit for black bass shall be six, not more than two of which may equal or exceed sixteen inches in length, in: Bashan Lake (East Haddam), Billings Lake (North Stonington), Black Pond (Meriden-Middlefield), Bolton Lakes (Upper, Middle, Lower; Bolton, Coventry, and Vernon), Lake Chamberlain (Bethany), Colebrook Flood Control Impoundment (Colebrook), Coventry Lake (Coventry), Halls Pond (Eastford and Ashford), Hayward Lake (East Haddam), Lake Kenosia (Danbury), Maltby Lakes (#1, #2, #3; New Haven, Orange-and West Haven), Mamasasco Lake (Ridgefield), Mansfield Hollow Reservoir (Mansfield, Chaplin, and Windham), Mashapaug Lake (Union), Pickerel Lake (Colchester and East Haddam), West Side Pond (Goshen) and Wononscopomuc Lake (Salisbury).

(2) The minimum length for black bass shall be sixteen inches and the daily creel limit for black bass shall be two, in: Gardner Lake (Salem, Montville, and Bozrah), Highland Lake (Winchester), Housatonic Lake (Shelton, Derby, Monroe, Oxford, and Seymour), Mohegan Park Pond (Norwich), Quinebaug Lake (Killingly), Taftville Reservoir (Norwich), and Wyassup Lake (North Stonington).

(3) The slot limit lengths for black bass shall be from twelve to eighteen inches and the daily creel limit for black bass shall be six, not more than one of which may equal or exceed eighteen inches, in: Amos lake (Preston), Moodus Reservoir (East Haddam), Mudge Pond (Sharon), and Pataganset Lake (East Lyme).

(4) The minimum length for black bass shall be eighteen (18) inches and the daily creel limit for black bass shall be one, in: Lake Saltonstall (Branford and East Haven).

(5) The commissioner may grant an exemption from minimum length and daily creel limit requirements of this section to any person issued a permit under section 26-112-42 to conduct a fishing tournament or derby on Gardner Lake or Mansfield Hollow Reservoir, provided that all fish caught shall be released without avoidable injury to the waters where taken, and that each participating boat shall be furnished with live wells with aerators or circulating pumps.

(6) The commissioner may grant an exemption from minimum length and daily creel limit requirements of this section to any person issued a permit under section 26-112-42 to conduct a fishing tournament or derby in any Bass Management Area between September 1 and June 30, provided that all fish caught shall be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters where taken, and that each participating boat shall be furnished with live wells with aerators or circulating pumps.

(7) The Bulls Bridge Bass Management Area shall consist of (a) the portion of the Housatonic River from Bulls Bridge Dam downstream to the Gaylordsville Bridge (Route 7) and (b) the Ten Mile River from the New York state border downstream to the confluence with the Housatonic River. The daily creel limit for smallmouth bass and largemouth bass is zero and all smallmouth bass and largemouth bass caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to

the waters from which taken. Possession of smallmouth bass or largemouth bass in the waters or on the shores of the Bulls Bridge Bass Management Area is prohibited.

(g) Wild Trout Management Areas.

(1) There shall be no closed season for trout [or charr] in class one Wild Trout Management Areas. Fishing in these areas is restricted to barbless single-hook artificial lures and barbless single-hook flies. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] in these areas is zero and all trout [and charr] caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout [or charr] on the waters or shores of these Wild Trout Management Areas is prohibited. The following are class one Wild Trout Management Areas:

(A) The Belding-Tankerhoosen Wild Trout Management Area, which shall consist of (i) those portions of the Tankerhoosen River and its tributaries contained within the Belding Wildlife Management Area in Vernon and (ii) those portions of the Tankerhoosen River and its tributaries contained within the Tankerhoosen Wildlife Management Area, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(B) Deep Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall consist of (i) that portion of Deep Brook in Newtown from Wasserman Way downstream to the confluence with the Pootatuck River and (ii) that portion of the Pootatuck River upstream and downstream of the confluence with Deep Brook as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(C) Eightmile River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be the Eightmile River in Southington.

(D) Hawleys Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Hawleys Brook in Easton and Weston within the Trout Brook Valley property that is owned by the State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Aspetuck Land Trust, and the town of Weston.

(E) Merrick Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall consist of (a) that portion of Merrick Brook and Beaver Brook in Scotland within the Talbot Wildlife Management Area and (b) that portion of Merrick Brook upstream of the Talbot Wildlife Management Area as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(F) Mill River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Mill River in Easton and Fairfield from upstream of the first bridge crossing below Easton Reservoir (South Park Avenue) as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to [downstream of the third bridge crossing (South Park Avenue)] the Merritt Parkway as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(G) Quinnipiac River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Quinnipiac River in Cheshire and in Southington upstream of Cheshire Street.

(H) Wachocastinook Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Wachocastinook Brook on Mt. Riga Corporation property in Salisbury as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(I) Upper Mill River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Mill River in Easton and Monroe from Route 59 downstream to Judd Road.

(J) Lower Macedonia Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Macedonia Brook in Kent from the confluence with Bog Hollow Brook downstream to Route 341.

(2) In class two Wild Trout Management Areas the daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] shall be two and the minimum length for trout [and charr] shall be twelve inches. Possession of more than two trout [or charr] or possession of trout [or charr] less than twelve inches on the waters or shores of these Wild Trout Management Areas is prohibited. The following are class two Wild Trout Management Areas:

(A) Heather Reaves Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Furnace Brook in Cornwall Bridge upstream of the Housatonic River as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(B) Salmon Brook (Glastonbury) Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Salmon Brook in Glastonbury downstream of Addison Pond.

(3) In class three Wild Trout Management Areas the minimum length for trout [and charr] shall be nine inches. Possession of trout [or charr] less than nine inches on the waters or shores of these Wild Trout Management Areas is prohibited. The following are class three Wild Trout Management Areas:

(A) Beacon Hill Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Beacon Hill Brook in Naugatuck and Beacon Falls from Route 63 downstream to the confluence with the Naugatuck River.

(B) Blackberry River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Blackberry River in Canaan downstream of the Whiting River to the confluence with the Housatonic River.

(C) East Aspetuck River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the East Aspetuck River in New Milford and in New Preston downstream of Lake Waramaug to the confluence with the Housatonic River.

(D) East Branch Naugatuck River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the East Branch Naugatuck River in Torrington from Newfield Road downstream to the confluence with the West Branch Naugatuck River.

(E) Farm River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Farm River from Mill Road in North Branford downstream to the I-95 Bridge in East Haven.

(F) Fenton River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be the Fenton River in Mansfield and in Willington.

(G) Little River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Little River in Oxford from Towner Lane downstream to Park Road.

(H) Macedonia Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be those portions of Macedonia Brook in Kent within Macedonia Brook State Park.

(I) Morgan Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be Morgan Brook in Barkhamsted.

(J) Sessions Woods Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Negro Hill Brook in Burlington upstream of Route 69.

(K) Norwalk River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Norwalk River in Wilton and in Ridgefield upstream of Wolf Pit Road.

(L) Pease Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Pease Brook in Lebanon within the Pease Brook Wildlife Management Area.

(M) Eric C. Schluntz Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be the portion of Roaring Brook in Glastonbury from Route 94 downstream to the confluence with the Connecticut River.

(N) Roaring Brook (Stafford) Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be the portion of Roaring Brook in Stafford and in Willington from Route 190 downstream to the confluence with the Willimantic River.

(O) Salmon Brook (Granby) Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Salmon Brook and East Branch of Salmon Brook in Granby and in East Granby from Route 20 downstream to the confluence with the Farmington River.

(P) Shunock Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be Shunock Brook in North Stonington.

(Q) Stony Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be Stony Brook in Montville.

(h) Atlantic salmon broodstock areas. From [October] September first through March thirty-first, angling for all species in the following areas is restricted to those methods specified by the commissioner for the taking of Atlantic salmon in accordance with section 26-112-45(c) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies:

(1) The Upper Naugatuck River Atlantic salmon broodstock area is that portion of the Naugatuck River from Route 118, Harwinton and Litchfield, downstream to Thomaston Dam, Thomaston.

(2) The Lower Naugatuck River Atlantic salmon broodstock area is that portion of the Naugatuck River from Prospect Street, Naugatuck, downstream to Pines Bridge Road, Beacon Falls.

(3) The Shetucket River Atlantic salmon broodstock area is that portion of the Shetucket River from the Scotland Dam, Windham, downstream to the Occum Dam, Norwich and Sprague.

(i) Trout Park Areas.

Except as provided in Section 26-112-46(c), in the following waters the daily creel limit for trout [and charr] shall be two and possession of more than two trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited:

(1) Black Rock pond and Branch Brook within Black Rock State Park (Watertown).

(2) Schreeder pond and Chatfield Hollow Brook within Chatfield Hollow State Park (Killingworth).

(3) Natchaug River within Natchaug State Forest (Eastford).

(4) Allen Brook Pond (Wharton Pond) within Wharton Brook State Park (Wallingford).

(5) Eight Mile Brook and Papermill Pond within Southford Falls State Park (Oxford).

(6) Day Pond (Colchester).

(7) Stratton Brook ponds and Stratton Brook as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Environmental Protection within Stratton Brook State Park (Simsbury).

(8) Valley Falls Pond within Valley Falls Park (Vernon).

(9) Mohegan Park Pond (Spaulding Pond, Norwich).

(10) Great Hollow Lake within Wolfe Park (Monroe).

(11) Kent Falls Brook within Kent Falls State Park (Kent).

(12) Pasture Pond (Quinebaug Valley Trout Hatchery), Plainfield.

(j) Sea-run trout streams.

(1) In the Eightmile River (East Haddam and Lyme): There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of the dam at Mt. Archer Road. The daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] is two (2) and the minimum length limit for trout [and charr] shall be fifteen (15) inches downstream of the dam at Mt. Archer Road. Possession of trout [or charr] less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(2) In the Farm River (North Branford and East Haven): There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of the I-95 bridge. The daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] is two (2) and the minimum length for trout [and charr] shall be fifteen (15) inches downstream of the I-95 bridge. Possession of trout [or charr] less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(3) In the Hammonasset River (Clinton, Killingworth, and Madison): Except as provided in section 26-122-46(c), downstream of the Hammonasset Dam (at the outlet of Hammonasset Reservoir) to the I-95 bridge the daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] is two (2) and the minimum length for trout [and charr] shall be nine (9) inches. Possession of trout [or charr] less than nine (9) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited. There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of the breached dam located approximately 300 feet above River Road. The daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] is two (2) and the minimum length for trout [and charr] shall be fifteen (15) inches downstream of the breached dam located approximately 300 feet above River Road. Possession of trout [or charr] less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(4) In Latimers Brook (East Lyme): There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of the I-95 bridge. Downstream of the I-95 bridge the daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] is two (2) and the minimum length for trout [and charr] shall be fifteen (15) inches. Possession of trout [or charr] less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(5) In Oil Mill Brook (Waterford, East Lyme): Downstream of the I-95 bridge the daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] is two (2) and the minimum length for trout [and charr] shall be fifteen (15) inches. Possession of trout [or charr] less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(6) In the Mianus River (Greenwich and Stamford): Except as provided in section 26-112-46(c), the daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] is two (2) and the minimum length for trout [and charr] shall be nine (9) inches. Possession of trout [or charr] less than nine (9) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(7) In Whitfords Brook (Groton, Ledyard, and Stonington): There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of the Route 184 bridge. Downstream of the Route 184 bridge the daily

creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] is two (2) and the minimum length for trout [and charr] shall be fifteen (15) inches. Possession of trout [or charr] less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(8) In the Saugatuck River (Danbury, Redding, Weston, and Westport): There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of Wood Dam. The daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] is two (2) and the minimum length for trout [and charr] shall be fifteen (15) inches downstream of Wood Dam. Possession of trout [or charr] less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(k) Trophy Trout Streams.

(1) In the Natchaug River (Eastford, Chaplin, and Windham), the daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] shall be two. Possession of more than two trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(2) In the Naugatuck River (Torrington, Harwinton, Plymouth, Watertown, Waterbury, Naugatuck, Beacon Falls, Seymour, and Ansonia), except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] shall be two. Possession of more than two trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited. Those portions of the Naugatuck River within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of tributary streams shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive.

(3) In that portion of the Pequonnock River in Trumbull, from the Whitney Avenue Bridge Crossing downstream to the Daniels Farm Road Bridge Crossing, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] shall be two. Possession of more than two trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(4) In the Pomperaug River (Woodbury and Southbury), the daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] shall be two. Possession of more than two trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(5) In the Salmon River (Colchester, East Haddam, East Hampton, and Haddam), except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] shall be two. Possession of more than two trout [or charr] on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(6) In the Shetucket River (Windham, Scotland, Sprague, and Norwich), the daily creel limit for any combination of trout [and charr] shall be two. Possession of more than two trout [or charr]

on such waters or their shores is prohibited. Those portions of the Shetucket River within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of tributary streams shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive.

(l) **Trophy Carp Waters.** The maximum length for common carp shall be twenty-six inches and the daily creel limit for common carp shall be one in: Batterson Park Pond (Farmington, New Britain), the Connecticut River, its coves, and those portions of its tributaries open to fishing throughout the year, as provided in section 26-112-44(a)(1) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, Squantz Pond (New Fairfield), and West Thompson Reservoir (Thompson). The commissioner may grant an exemption from maximum length and daily creel limit requirements of this subsection to any person issued a permit under section 26-112-42 to conduct a fishing tournament or derby in any Trophy Carp Water provided that all fish caught shall be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters where taken.

Summary of proposal: This proposal amends regulations concerning Trout Management Areas, Wild Trout Management Areas, Atlantic Salmon Broodstock Areas and Trout Parks, and establishes a new type of designated management area, Trophy Carp Waters.

Under Subsection (c), Trout Management Areas (TMA):

- A short closed season on a small 1.2 mile portion of the Farmington River TMA located in the Riverton area (intention is to restore traditional Opening Day usage and to support local, private and not-for-profit organizations fishing promotion endeavors on the upper West Branch Farmington River).
- The Mill River TMA (Fairfield) is changed from a seasonal TMA to year-round catch-and-release.
- For consistency with the other TMA listings, a sentence is inserted explicitly stating that there is no closed season for the Moosup River and Salmon River TMA's.

Under subsection (g), Wild Trout Management Areas (WTMA), the Mill River WTMA is extended downstream to the upper boundary of the Mill River TMA (Merritt Parkway).

Under subsection (h), Atlantic salmon broodstock areas, the period when the broodstock salmon gear restriction applies to all species in broodstock areas is updated from October 1 – March 31 to September 1 – March 31 to match current the September 1 catch and release start date in the rivers where fishing for Atlantic Salmon is allowed.

Under subsection (i), Trout Parks, Pasture Pond is added to the list of Trout Parks.

A new subsection (l) is added that establishes a new type of special management area, "Trophy Carp Waters", with a one carp per day creel limit and a 26 inch maximum length for Common Carp. Proposed locations are Batterson Park Pond, the Connecticut River (including the portions of tributaries open year-round), Squantz Pond and West Thompson Reservoir.

Finally, in a conforming change the use of the term “charr” in reference to certain salmonid species (most notably Brook Trout) commonly identified as “trout” is eliminated throughout this section.

Hearing testimony. Two individuals provided testimony at the public hearing. Keith Cagle, chairperson of the Connecticut Conservation Advisory Council, and also representing the Fairfield County League of Sportsmen and the Fairfield Fish and Game Association, spoke to indicate support for all six sections of proposed regulations. Jacob Rajewski testified in favor of the proposed Trophy Carp Waters, noting avid catch-and-release carp anglers are very concerned that carp populations nationwide are being decimated by bow fishing. He thanked DEEP for making this proposal, hoping that it would become a model for other states. Mr. Rajewski also asked if the Housatonic River could be added to the list of Trophy Carp Waters.

Comments: The proposed amendment was endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). In written comments the FAC expressed support for the provisions amending the regulations concerning the Farmington River TMA establishing a short closed season in the Riverton area, the changes to the Mill River TMA and the Mill River WTMA, and the establishment of Trophy Carp Waters. The Connecticut Council of Trout Unlimited and the Nutmeg Chapter of Trout Unlimited also both commented in support of the changes to the Mill River TMA and the Mill River WTMA. The Town of Barkhamsted (letter submitted by the first Selectman), two Riverton businesses, Uncle Aaron’s Tackle Shack and the Riverton General Store, and the *Friends of American Legion and Peoples State Forests* submitted written comments in support of the proposal to establish a short closed fishing season on the portion of the West Branch Farmington River in the Riverton Area. One individual representing a fishing events business concern (Carp Tournament Series LLC) based in Oklahoma commented in support of protecting “trophy carp”.

Twelve individuals submitted comments that included support for the changes to the Mill River TMA and the Mill River WTMA. One individual expressed opposition, as he considered the changes a further restriction of fishing on this river.

Twelve individuals submitted comments in support of establishing a short closed season on the West Branch Farmington River in the Riverton area, several noting a desire to restore a more traditional Opening Day experience in the Riverton Area. Nine individuals expressed opposition to this proposal. It appeared that there may have been some confusion concerning the extent of the proposed closure or concerning the current regulations for the river in the Riverton area. Two of those writing in opposition appeared to think that the proposed short closure would apply to the entire 20 plus miles of the Farmington River TMA (and not a short 1.5 mile stretch) and three others suggested that instead of a closure, just make the river in this area “catch-and-release only” (the river, however, in this area is currently “catch-and-release only” during this period).

Seventy-six individual commenters expressed support for the carp provisions (establishing specially designated Trophy Carp Waters with alternative regulations) in this section and in section 4 (establishing statewide creel limits for carp). One of these comments included a request to prohibit bow fishing in the proposed Trophy Carp Waters and a second requested banning bow fishing statewide. Two commenters also suggested that the proposed Trophy Carp

waters designation be expanded to include the large impoundments on the Housatonic River (Lakes Lillinonah, Zoar and Housatonic). All of the favorable comments contained similar sentiments concerning the projected benefits of promoting and managing a carp fishery and many (forty-four) of the favorable comments included a standard statement within their comments: *“I support the CT Fishery proposals for Amendment to Section 26-112-45 & creation of certain Trophy Carp Waters. Catch & Release angling for Trophy sized Common carp (including mirror and other scale patterns) is growing rapidly and providing significant economic stimulus to businesses in CT. This step by CT DEEP Fisheries creates a far sighted opportunity to help protect trophy carp that will ultimately attract more anglers to CT.”* Nine of the individual commenters in support of the proposed regulations for Common Carp noted an affiliation with the Carp Anglers Group, a national carp fishing organization. Although it is difficult to determine the residency status of commenters, at least one of the favorable comments originated in the United Kingdom, one was submitted by a Texas resident, and one was from a Georgia resident.

Eight unfavorable comments were submitted concerning the proposed establishment of Trophy Carp Waters, of which five considered common carp to be non-native and invasive or have very invasive tendencies and therefore should not be protected. Three of the unfavorable comments expressed concern that length limits for common carp would limit or prevent bow hunting in the proposed Trophy Carp Waters, especially in the Connecticut River.

Two individuals submitted comments that included supported for the proposed changes concerning the period when the broodstock salmon gear restriction applies to all species in broodstock Atlantic Salmon areas. No comments specific to the designation of Pasture Pond as a “Trout Park” were received.

Finally, the agency received seventeen submissions that indicated support or approval to all the proposed regulations, or all but one or two of the six sections of these proposed regulations. Seventeen of these submissions indicated support for this section. Conversely, five of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all sections of the proposed regulations including this section, several expressing concern that fisheries regulations were getting too complex.

Final Wording: As proposed.

Explanation and response to comments: The Mill River is a unique cold tailwater stream in Fairfield County that supports both stocked trout year-round and naturally reproducing wild trout populations. These amendments are intended to better protect the populations of naturally reproducing trout and stocked trout from undue depletion by eliminating harvest throughout this unique stretch of river. The “catch-and-release only” Class I Mill River Wild Trout Management Area (WMTA) (subsection (g)) would be expanded downstream to the Mill River Trout Management Area (TMA) and fishing in the Mill River Trout Management Area (subsection (c)) would be limited to “catch-and-release only” year-round (currently some harvest is allowed from Opening Day through August 30).

This 3.35-mile-long section of stream on the upper of the Mill River in Fairfield and Easton is fed by a bottom-release from the 90-foot-deep Easton Reservoir, making it unusually cold and highly suitable for trout survival, growth, and reproduction.

Annual summer trout population sampling indicates that the Mill River supports abundant, fast-growing wild trout within the existing WTMA, including naturalized wild brown trout and re-introduced native brook trout. Wild trout populations of this quality are uncommon in Connecticut, and are especially rare in the southwestern Connecticut. Sampling downstream of the WTMA in the two areas currently open to harvest has shown unusually good numbers of young wild trout although stocked trout and most larger catchable-size wild trout have been depleted by summer.

In 2012, an eleven month angler survey was conducted on the three tailwater sections of the Mill River to assess the potential and impacts of expanding wild trout management. The WTMA supported consistent year-round angling effort, while the section downstream of the WMTA with no special regulations supported significant fishing only on Opening Day and shortly thereafter. Adult trout stocking in the Seasonal TMA Section supported good levels of effort and catch rates through the early spring and late spring periods before catchable-size trout were depleted.

DEEP believes that any impacts to anglers who currently harvest trout would be minimal compared to the benefits. The proposed year-round catch-and-release regulations on the previously seasonal catch-and-release TMA would allow more stocked and wild trout to remain in the river year-round, and greatly expand high-quality trout fishing opportunities in this cold regulated-flow stream right through the summer (much like the West Branch Farmington River year-round TMA). Wild trout would be afforded additional protection throughout the upper Mill River, and possibly increase in population stability and contribution to the catch in this area, and native brook trout may receive enough protection to expand downstream through the entire reach.

The proposed short closed season on a small portion of the West Branch Farmington River (part of the Farmington River TMA) located in the Riverton area was requested by the Town of Barkhamsted, several Riverton business owners, and the *Friends of American Legion and Peoples State Forests*. This change is intended to restore a traditional Opening Day atmosphere to the upper West Branch Farmington River. As many anglers view the traditional Opening Day when the fishing season first opens for the spring as a longstanding rite of spring passage, this would likely increase the number of anglers fishing this section of river on Opening Day, and also enhance participation in a traditional Opening Day fishing derby held in Riverton (since 1949). Participation has declined since this section of river became open to fishing year-round in 2012.

With over eighteen miles of the Farmington River TMA remaining open year round, this closure should not unduly impact catch-and-release anglers who fish this TMA. Conversely, it will benefit both the Riverton area and anglers who enjoy a traditional Opening Day experience.

This proposal establishes designated "Trophy Carp Waters" where harvest of larger fish would be prohibited. Proposed locations are Batterson Park Pond, Connecticut River (including the

portions of tributaries open year-round), Squantz Pond and West Thompson Reservoir. All four waters are known to support abundant, high quality carp fisheries. This proposal is intended to further promote an emerging new fishery (catch-and-release fishing for common carp) by maintaining adequate populations of the larger fish in these high-quality areas that many catch-and-release carp anglers target. Provisions are also included to authorize the commissioner to exempt participants in catch-and-release carp tournaments from the Trophy Carp waters regulations, enabling them to retain live fish in their possession that don't conform to the creel or length limits until such time as the fish can be weighed or otherwise measured for standing in the tournament, and then released unharmed back into the waters from which taken.

The establishment of designated Trophy Carp Waters is a novel, and hopefully innovative way to promote emerging new fisheries and provide additional fishing opportunities. DEEP believes however that as this approach can be considered an experiment, expanding the designation to additional waters, such as the large impoundments on Housatonic River would be premature, and could be counterproductive to the intent of providing diverse fishing opportunities.

DEEP recognizes that Common Carp are not native to Connecticut (or to North America for that matter) but notes that a number of other currently popular Connecticut game fishes including Largemouth, Smallmouth Bass, Rainbow Trout, and Northern Pike are also not native to Connecticut, and some, most notably are not native to North America. All provide numerous fishing opportunities and are occupying important niches in this state's current aquatic ecosystems.

Although in parts of both their North American and European ranges, the negative impacts (such as extreme population sizes, high levels of turbidity, and massive loss of habitat for other species) on aquatic ecosystems by Common Carp are well documented, in other areas of their ranges, these same negative impacts are not observed. Such is the case in Connecticut, where although very noticeable during spawning congregations, Common Carp do not reach the dense populations that can impact aquatic ecosystems and extreme habitat modifications are simply not observed.

DEEP also recognizes that a small constituency of bow anglers exists in Connecticut, and that a twenty-six inch maximum length limit combined with a one fish per day creel limit will greatly inhibit bow fishing in the Trophy Carp Waters by severely restricting the number and size of carp that can be harvested. DEEP believes that the impact of the proposed regulations to bow anglers would be limited (smaller carp and several other species can be targeted) and the benefits would be greater, with the resource being further protected and a relatively new, but growing, fishery being enhanced.

DEEP agrees that the impact of the proposed regulations establishing Trophy Carp Waters could greatly impact bow anglers that target carp in those waters, however this proposal has the potential to develop a world-class fishery which, will attract anglers from throughout North America and from a number of other countries. Additionally, there are other species that could be targeted by bow anglers in the Trophy Carp Waters (most notably, bowfin in the Connecticut River), and there are a number of other waters not designated as Trophy Carp Waters including the Housatonic River impoundments and the Quinebaug and Thames river systems that contain

robust common carp populations. DEEP believes that the benefits (enhancement and growth of an emerging fishery) of this proposal could be substantial, and tend to outweigh any negative impacts, and notes the number of comments in support (over seventy) far outweighed the comments expressing concern over the new limitations on bow fishing (three).

The proposal concerning gear type restrictions in the Atlantic Salmon Broodstock Areas will eliminate some confusion and simplify regulations for these areas. Until 2014, the Inland Fisheries Division began their fall stockings of broodstock Atlantic salmon in early October. Beginning in 2014, the first stockings have occurred in late September, in part to facilitate hatchery operations. Seasons, creel and length limits, and methods for fishing for broodstock Atlantic salmon are set by Commissioner's declaration and currently reflect the earlier stocking date. This proposal makes conforming changes to the regulations for fishing in the designated Atlantic Salmon Broodstock Areas (stretches of the Naugatuck River and Shetucket River where the salmon for the broodstock fishery are stocked) by updating the period during which restrictions on allowable methods for fishing for all fish species apply in the designated Atlantic Salmon Broodstock Areas.

Pasture Pond, located at the Quinebaug Valley Trout Hatchery, had traditionally been managed as a children's only fishing area. That designation was recently removed as the age restriction on children's only areas had become counterproductive to facilitating family-style fishing where children fish in an all-ages group or are assisted/mentored by adults. Pasture Pond continues to be a popular fishing spot for younger anglers and families, designating it as a Trout Park with a reduced creel limit is intended to enhance their fishing experience by increasing the opportunity to catch a trout.

Finally, a concurrent proposal (section 4, amending sec. 26-112-45) includes a technical change that simplifies regulatory language by eliminating the use of the term "charr" in reference to certain salmonid species.

Section 6. Section 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is amended to read as follows:

26-112-48. Miscellaneous restrictions

(a) In the following waters the indicated miscellaneous restrictions shall apply:

(1) Bog Meadow Pond, Norwich. The use of vessels is prohibited.

[(2) East Twin Lake, Salisbury. The use of radios by fishermen is prohibited from 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. prevailing time.]

[(3)] (2) Hewitt Pond (Lower Hewitt Pond), North Stonington. The operation of vessels with motors, except for electric motors, is prohibited.

[(4)] (3) Housatonic River, Kent. Those portions of the Housatonic River within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of Kent Falls Brook and Macedonia Brook shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive.

[(5)] (4) Isinglass Reservoir (Far Mill Reservoir), Shelton. Ice fishing is prohibited.

[(6)] (5) Messerschmidt's Pond, Deep River, Westbrook. The operation of vessels with motors, except for electric motors, is prohibited.

[(7)] (6) Quassapaug Lake, Middlebury, Woodbury. The closed season for fishing shall be from midnight on the last day of February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April. Icefishing is prohibited. The daily creel limit for trout [and charr] shall be one and the minimum length shall be eighteen inches. The daily creel limit for black bass shall be one and the minimum length shall be eighteen inches.

[(8)] (7) Salmon River, East Haddam. Those portions of the Salmon River in East Haddam within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the spring entering the Salmon River, approximately 220 feet south of the paved boat ramp in Sunrise Resort State Park, shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive.

[(9)] (8) Saugatuck Reservoir, Easton, Redding, Weston. Ice fishing is prohibited.

[(10)] (9) Shelton Reservoir #2, Shelton. Ice fishing is prohibited.

[(11)] Trap Falls Reservoir, Shelton. The closed season for fishing shall be from midnight on November thirtieth through midnight on June thirtieth. Icefishing is prohibited. The daily creel limit for black bass shall be two and the minimum length shall be sixteen inches.]

[(12)] (10) West Pequonnock Reservoir, Monroe. Ice fishing is prohibited.

(b) (1) In reclaimed waters the use of fish, alive or dead, as bait, is prohibited when so posted. The possession on such waters or the shores of such waters of any species of fish, alive or dead, except trout[, charr] or salmon, is prohibited when so posted.

(2) In the following waters the use of alewives, blueback (glut or river) herring, gizzard, hickory or threadfin shad as bait is prohibited. The possession on such waters or the shores of such waters of any live individuals of said species, is prohibited.

Alexander Lake, Killingly.

Colebrook Flood Control Impoundment, Colebrook and Massachusetts.

East Twin Lake, Salisbury.

Lake Pocotopaug, East Hampton.

Saugatuck Reservoir, Easton, Redding, Weston.

Shenipsit Lake, Ellington, Tolland, Vernon.

Waumgumbaug Lake (Coventry Lake), Coventry.

West Branch Reservoir (Hogback), Hartland, Colebrook.

West Hill Pond, New Hartford, Barkhamsted.

West Twin Lake, Salisbury.

Wononscopomuc Lake, Salisbury.

Proposal summary: This proposal will 1) remove site specific regulations from Trap Falls Reservoir, a main distribution reservoir supplying potable water to Aquarion Water Company's main system, 2) remove an out-of-date and ambiguous prohibition on the use of radios at night by anglers on East Twin Lake, and 3) eliminate the use of the term "charr" in reference to certain salmonid species (most notably Brook Trout) commonly identified as "trout".

Hearing testimony. Two individuals provided testimony at the public hearing. Keith Cagle, chairperson of the Connecticut Conservation Advisory Council, and also representing the Fairfield County League of Sportsmen and the Fairfield Fish and Game Association, spoke to indicate support for all six sections of proposed regulations. The second individual did not comment on this section.

Comments: The proposed amendment was endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council. None of the comments submitted specifically addressed the provisions of this section in detail. However, the agency received seventeen submissions that indicated support or approval to all the proposed regulations, or all but one or two of the six sections of these proposed regulations. All seventeen of these submissions indicated support for this section. Conversely, five of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all proposed regulation sections.

Final Wording: As proposed.

Explanation: This proposal removes site specific regulations from Trap Falls Reservoir, a main distribution reservoir supplying potable water to Aquarion Water Company's main system. At one time, it was thought possible that this waterbody would be opened up to fishing and

special regulations for seasons and black bass (largemouth bass & smallmouth bass) were established at Trap Falls Reservoir in case it was opened. However, Trap Falls Reservoir remains closed to fishing and Aquarion Water Company has no plans to change this policy. Especially with the improved availability of information (including regulations) via the internet, Aquarion Water Company feels that the existence of fishing regulations specific to Trap Falls Reservoir can cause confusion as anglers may assume that the reservoir is open to fishing as there are fishing regulations specific to the reservoir. They therefore requested that these site-specific regulations be removed.

The prohibition on late-night use of radios by fisherman was put into place sometime in the 1970's. This regulation was written in a much earlier, less technologically complex time. In light of all the various newer technologies and changing fishing patterns, it is now outdated and ambiguous. The original intent was to limit late night noise on the lake at a time when night fishing the lake was much more common (reportedly not unusual to have 50 or more boats out on the lake fishing for Kokanee salmon well past dark. In the 1990's Kokanee salmon had effectively disappeared. Although kokanee numbers have rebounded somewhat, it is unlikely that a large nighttime fishery will again develop. Removal of this regulation was approved by the Town of Salisbury.

Finally, a concurrent proposal (section 4, amending sec. 26-112-45) includes a technical change that simplifies regulatory language by eliminating the use of the term "charr" in reference to certain salmonid species.